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The Stoics on *Lekta*

All There Is to Say

Ada Bronowski



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ADA BRONOWSKI

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP,
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
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First Edition published in 2019

Impression: 1

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Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2018968023

ISBN 978-0-19-884288-0

Printed and bound by
CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon, CR0 4YY

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For I.B.



Still from *Raven Girl*, ballet created by Wayne McGregor for the Royal Ballet in 2013.

Acknowledgements

This book is a revised version of my doctoral thesis. It began under the supervision of Michael Frede who was an awe-inspiring model, not only for his own students, but for anyone studying ancient philosophy. I was lucky enough to be his last student. His tragic death devolved onto me the sense of a responsibility, an *officium* as Cicero would say, to carry out the unfinished work begun under his guidance. The work continued thanks to Jonathan Barnes, who was more than generous in taking over the role of supervisor. I was privileged to profit from his unlimited knowledge and his idiosyncratic combination of kindness and sharpness of mind.

I received probing and helpful questions and comments from my doctoral examiners Benjamin Morison and Tobias Reinhardt, whose support and encouragement have been invaluable. Susanne Bobzien ran an Ockham's razor through the first version of the manuscript. I cannot thank her enough for that initial reading, to which much of the present book is an attempt to respond.

Discussions on various parts and ideas in the book with Rick Benitez, Charles Brittain, Paolo Fait, Jean-Baptiste Gourinat, Vanessa de Harven, and Christopher Shields have helped me greatly in clarifying them. The erudition and enduring friendship of my first teacher of ancient philosophy, Carlos Levy, have been priceless, as also the many joyous and inspiring encounters with Laura Anstee, Philip Bullock, Damien Caluori, Anna Corrias, Stefano Evangelista, Luke Fischer, Veronique Fischer, Stephen Gaukroger, Daniela Helbig, Patrick Jane, Erasmus Mayr, Charlotte Murgier, Dalia Nassar, Nick Owen, Henry Power, Christopher Tietjens, Emi Takeshi Tull, Anna Tropia, Anik Waldow, Pippa Wildwood, and Fosca Mariani Zini. Last but not least, I could not have done anything without the constant support of my beloved family.

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Introduction

This book is about the introduction of *lekta* by the Stoics into their systematic account of reality, as real items in ontology. This affirmation alone is liable to raise a few eyebrows: in some, because they will have never heard of *lekta*, in others, because this is not quite consonant with how *lekta* are often presented. In many, or most, studies of *lekta*, or in which *lekta* are discussed, they are considered not as items belonging to the account of reality, but rather, as belonging to the more restricted context of the production of meaningful speech. Accordingly *lekta* are often discussed as part of an examination of a Stoic theory of meaning, and as an original component in a burgeoning philosophy of language. In this respect, the Greek term ‘λεκτόν’ is often translated as ‘sayable’ in English, in what is intended to be a calque from the Greek. The Greek term ‘lekton’ is derived from the Greek verb ‘legein’, ‘to say’. It is in fact the form of the Greek verbal adjective, which has connotations of both passivity and modality, both captured by the English ‘sayable’: it is what is said, or can be said, under certain conditions. In one important source-text we are told: ‘we get things said, which are in fact *lekta*’.¹ These are contrasted, in the very same passage, with sounds which we utter, but emphatically do not say. *Lekta* are thus what we get said when we utter utterances. But, it follows, not any kind of utterance, only the utterances which get a *lekton* said—that is the condition. *Lekta* are thus sayables, the sort of things which get said, and can only get said by uttering certain kinds of expressions, whose characteristics are yet to be determined.

Alongside this role in language, however, a number of concurring texts report that *lekta* ‘subsist in correspondence with rational impressions’.² This tends to suggest, before any further interpretation, that *lekta* are not bound to a role in the production of language, but that they contribute to our thought processes. Still other texts report that *lekta* are what is true or false, in contrast to rival views which identify truth and falsehood either in utterances or in thought.³ This again tends to suggest that *lekta* are considered by the Stoics to

¹ D.L. 7.57: ‘λέγεται δὲ τὰ πράγματα, ἃ δὲ καὶ λεκτὰ τυγχάνει’.

² D.L. 7.63; S.E. M. 8.70.

³ S.E. M. 8.69, 8.74; D.L. 7.65.

be distinct from questions of speech, as also from questions pertaining to the contents of our thoughts. In still other texts, *lekta* are said to be the effect of causes, or what causes are of.⁴ The context of discussion in these latter texts is even further removed from questions about language or mental operations, and suggests that *lekta* are items in ontology and physics. The effect of a cause, whatever it may be, has been caused to be or to happen, and is thereby proved to be a real thing, whose origin is parsed in causal terms; it therefore has some sort of ontological status, and as such deserves to be counted amongst the constituents of reality.

Such a variety of contexts of discussion calls into question the traditional first association of *lekta* with language. The major claim of this book is precisely this, that *lekta* are not linguistic items, but items with an ontological status, which language can express. Their relation to language is the relation language has to reality, or rather the relation reality has with language, namely that reality has a structure, which language is capable of grasping and expressing. *Lekta* are part of the complex configurations which make up this structure. It is one feature of these configurations that they are what language expresses. These configurations are thus what is said, or what there is to say, and are available to language; but they are not determined by language. The world is there to be said. This leads to envisaging the role of language as instrumental in accessing its content, rather than productive of it. For if *lekta* are indeed what we get said when we make the relevant utterances—the utterances, that is, which are more than mere sounds—then language is the means, which certain rational beings possess (in particular human beings⁵) in order to access this structure. It is thus the theory of language, and not the theory of *lekta*, which belongs to a restricted context of discussion within the systematic account of reality. To argue for this view of *lekta*, the whole systematic account will need to be appraised, and re-appraised, once certain historiographical simplifications and assumptions have been exposed and challenged.

In this light, a first methodological point will be to keep to the transliterated form '*lekton*' and resist translating the Greek term 'λεκτόν' as 'a sayable'. This will also be the case with a number of key terms which will feature in relation to *lekta*, and which we shall refer to also in transliterated form, such as '*katēgorēma*', '*axiōma*', '*ptōsis*', and also the term '*systema*', which, we shall see, is used by the Stoics in such a distinct way that a seemingly straightforward translation as 'system' confuses rather than illuminates the Stoic understanding of the term. The choice of transliteration results, not from a taste for preciousness or antiquarianism, but from a desire to approach the texts, and the

⁴ S.E. *M.* 9.211; Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.3–19; Clem. *Strom.* 8.9.26.4.

⁵ There are other rational beings, such as the stars and the planets, which do not have recourse to language to live out their rationality, see 1.3.3 n.111 below.

theories they transmit, with the least possible pre-established assumptions or expectations. For terms such as ‘proposition’, often used to translate the Greek ‘*axiōma*’, or ‘predicate’, for ‘*katēgorēma*’, are loaded with layers of connotations acquired over the centuries of philosophical analysis that separate us from the Stoics. But these terms are often used appositely by the Stoics, in ways which are innovative and often puzzling for their own contemporaries and successive commentators and critics throughout antiquity. That the *katēgorēma*—literally, that which is said of something—makes its earliest appearance in the Stoic corpus of texts as the effect of a cause, and not as a logical predicate, which the Aristotelian resonances of the term may suggest, is one example of how free of preconceived expectations a reader must be in approaching these terms and their usage by the Stoics. Already in antiquity, frustration with Stoic terminology and subsequent incomprehension of the usage of terms punctuate the critical debates arising from Stoic theories in all domains, particularly in relation to *lekta* and the constellation of notions surrounding them. As we shall see in detail in the sections of the book devoted to these debates,⁶ there is an ideological prejudice amongst ancient commentators. They attempt to present the Stoics as merely introducing terminological coinages for things that Plato or Aristotle had already discussed, using different terms. It is partly through the influence of these commentators that the specificity and originality of Stoic doctrine became blurred, if not eradicated. In many respects, the Stoics have been the victims of the complexity of their philosophical account, starting with terminological subtleties.

This leads us to a second methodological question, that of the approach to the source-texts. It is well known that there is a tragic paucity of original texts when it comes to the Stoics. The difficulties that follow are of two main kinds: first, that of reconstructing a doctrine which has come down to us in fragmentary form, though an overwhelming number of those fragments assure us that Stoic doctrine is eminently systematic. It is celebrated as such in antiquity, by both defenders and detractors, in that it presumes to give a complete account for all there is, for all there is to know, for all there is to say, and for all there is to do, in terms of a deeply interrelated and consistent world view. The second well-known difficulty is that of discerning a development in thought corresponding to a periodization marked by the different figureheads of the Stoic school. There are about six centuries of self-proclaimed active Stoic philosophers, with the later figureheads, in particular Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, appealing directly to the authority of the founding fathers, in particular Zeno of Citium and Chrysippus. However, especially with regard to these founding theories—what is sometimes referred to as Stoic orthodoxy—who said what, and why, are for the most part questions without

⁶ See in particular 3.2, 3.3, 6.3, 7.3, 8.2.2.2, and 9.1.2 below.

answers. And yet, whenever we do have a snippet of precision about this or that thinker, on this or that topic, we see how important the internal debates are in shaping and honing a line of thought within the school.

The state of the sources thus poses two interconnected challenges: on the one hand, that of identifying the elements which characterize the unified, ordered, and all-inclusive account which is what each generation of Stoic philosopher stands for and appeals to.⁷ In this perspective, the lone voices whose names are mentioned in passing are recorded as oddities, precisely for having set themselves apart from a standard Stoic line. For example, Aristo of Chios, a contemporary and follower of Zeno of Citium, the founder of the Stoic school, stands out for having rejected the study of logic and physics, advocating only that of some branches of ethics; or a certain Basilides, otherwise bewilderingly unknown, whose claim to fame is a lonely mention by Sextus Empiricus, as a Stoic who claimed that ‘nothing incorporeal exists’.⁸ What these isolated voices contribute is to ratify and confirm, by contrast, the uniformity and solidity of the school’s doctrine.

On the other hand, it is clear that this doctrine evolves, if only in response to its critics. Our sources are generous enough to attest to this when we find aligned, for example, Zeno’s formulation of the goal of life as ‘living in agreement’, followed by Chrysippus’ interpretation as ‘living in agreement with nature’, itself followed by other formulae offered by a number of successive figures from later generations, each adding to and amplifying the original view held by Zeno.⁹ Thus, whilst the elaboration of a consistent and uniform Stoic line of thought is the concern of every generation of Stoic philosophers, the developments of doctrine which follow from explanations and clarifications of one or the other question are inevitable—and such developments are due to specific contributions from specific figures. Indeed, some contributions are so overwhelmingly innovative and decisive for Stoicism that they are not so much turning-points as points of no return, becoming definitive of Stoic doctrine. The contributions credited to Chrysippus in questions of logic, physics, and epistemology are one such moment in the development of Stoic doctrine. From this perspective, the challenge is therefore to distinguish a transformative contribution from an explanation of doctrine, and an

⁷ This can produce interesting forms of doctrinal schizophrenia. Seneca will be one such an example in our investigations: we shall encounter him in the pages of this book as torn between an all-dominating ‘us’, the Stoic school, and his own attempts, not so much at cutting loose, but at re-ordering priorities which should be ‘our’ main concern.

⁸ On Aristo see S.E. M. 7.12 and D.L. 7.160. On the hyper-materialist Basilides see S.E. M. 8.258. Nothing else is known of this figure, and there are no concrete grounds to think he is the Basilides of Scythopolis listed in later chronicles, who may or may not have been a teacher of Marcus Aurelius, though Marcus himself never mentions him; see GOULET 1994 p.90 entry 14 and further speculative suggestion in entry 15.

⁹ In Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.6a.

explanation from a grounding principle, which is either explicitly attested as a pillar of the system established by Zeno himself, or is sufficiently accepted and widely repeated in different and various sources as to suggest that it is a pillar of the system.

When it comes to *lekta*, these two perspectives play an important role. For texts which report discussions of *lekta* are few. What is more, as mentioned briefly above, the discussions belong, or seem to belong, to different contexts: causation, logic, language, mind, impulse, and action. A number of the relevant texts have equal claims of authority for relaying core doctrine. Thus both the question of a systematic, uniform account and the possibility of a development in the theory of *lekta* are particularly urgent, and particularly complex. For the different contexts of discussion of *lekta* belong to core Stoic doctrine. From this authoritative group of texts we learn, firstly, that *lekta* are one of the four incorporeals which constitute, alongside the corporeals, all there is;¹⁰ secondly, that *lekta* have a relation of correspondence to the content of our thoughts, as already noted; thirdly, that a *katēgorēma* is the incorporeal effect of a corporeal cause; fourthly, that *lekta* are what gets said when we speak. There are various ramifications to these claims, connected also to the critical debate of which they are part; they will be examined in depth in the pages that follow. It is sufficient here to set out these four cardinal directions, since it is the clash between their disparity and the systematicity to which they are supposed to contribute that has determined the approach to *lekta* in ancient historiography and in modern scholarship.

This disparity has justified developmental readings that take one or the other context as original, and the rest as derivative and inserted along the way to fill gaps in the theory. Most notably, as adumbrated above, a prevalent reading has taken as its root the linguistic character of *lekta*. This has shaped an account of *lekta* as the fulcrum of a semantic theory which, with varying degrees of sustained analysis in the scholarship, has produced sometimes refined accounts of Stoic epistemology whereby our mental operations are essentially bound to our linguistic capacities. The linguistic reading thus takes the descriptions of *lekta* as corresponding to the content of thoughts, as a further development from a prior and binding account of the production of meaningful language. Another parallel interpretation takes the causal role of *lekta* as prior and the role of *lekta* in language as a later development. Again, these are rough sketches of directions for interpretation. These interpretations are analysed in depth in this book, with due attention to detail, successes, failures, and aims. One point that can be noted without going into detail is that a developmental reading imposes a hierarchy of authority on our source-texts. But this, in fact, is an extremely delicate matter.

¹⁰ E.g. S.E. M. 10.218.

Given similar claims for authority of the texts relaying descriptions of *lekta* which pertain to the four contexts of discussion presented above, there is a more neutral approach than assuming the disparity is the result of a developmental growth from one context to another. The more neutral approach is to think that it is always one and the same sort of item that is being described, whether from the point of view of its ontological status as an incorporeal thing constitutive of reality, together with the other incorporeals and the corporeals; or as that which corresponds to the content of our thoughts; or as that which gets said when we use language; or as that which gets caused.

Before succumbing, therefore, to certain expeditious compromises required by a developmental account, there are two decisive barriers to face—if only eventually, if nothing gives, to retreat before them. For the kind of texts at our disposal not only legitimate but necessitate that, firstly, we approach them without assuming there is a privileged context of discussion of *lekta* amongst them, and, secondly, any eventual claims reached with regard to an analysis of one of the contexts of discussion must be gauged against the analysis of the other contexts. That is to say that, as long as there are no reasons to discredit the authority of a text, each context of discussion constitutes a safeguard against over-hasty conclusions in another context that would contradict those reached in the first. Thus, if causes cause *lekta*, then a first clash which it seems necessary for us to avoid is the assumption that *lekta*, as that which gets said when we speak, are the equivalent of the meanings of words. Since causes cause things to happen regardless of words having meanings or, for that matter, anyone's utterance of signifying words, causes do not cause meanings.

The developmental approach leads to the overall marginalization of the notion of the *lekton*: the *lekton* remains a Stoic oddity, which surfaces in pointed, (over-)complicated—but circumscribed—theories, which ultimately do not have any decisive repercussions on the broader and more important questions in either of the three main domains of philosophy: logic, physics, or ethics. It is even the seemingly multifarious roles *lekta* are shown to play that would confirm their restricted importance. They are gap-fillers. In short, the presence of *lekta* neither threatens nor contributes to the systematic account that is otherwise not denied to the Stoics. This reveals an even deeper bias in the scholarship, ancient and modern, about the nature of the systematic account to which the Stoics are supposed to have adhered.

Already in antiquity some of the Stoics' critics accept, and indeed celebrate, the Stoic contribution to the formalization of what a complete philosophical account should involve. Famously, this comes down to dividing philosophy into three main domains of inquiry (logic, physics, and ethics), and producing answers to the different questions these inquiries lead to. The same critics, in critical discussions of the Stoic *lekta*, emphasize how the supposed reality of *lekta* has no weight in any of the questions relevant to the inquiries which make up the Stoic system. In their wake, modern scholarship has unanimously

accepted the Stoic influence in establishing the tripartition of philosophy as the basis for any self-respecting ancient philosophical system. Especially in view of the fragmentary corpus of texts, the anchor-points of tripartition play a stabilizing role according to which texts and contexts of discussion can be ordered. Thus, as long as a notion or theory has its place somewhere within the ramifications stemming from the three main parts, the system is preserved. In particular, certain discussions and texts concerning *lekta* can be neatly nested under one sub-part of logic, or what, more precisely, the Stoics call dialectic, without what is said about *lekta* being of any significance to other parts of the system.

This is convenient and neat. It is, moreover, the case that *lekta* are discussed with relation to a certain number of notions belonging under the heading of dialectic. This localization on the map of philosophical inquiry is useful. However, a close examination of what precisely the Stoics say about the tripartition of philosophy will show that it is not the tripartition which guarantees systematicity. Tripartition will be shown to be at best one way of describing or commenting on the Stoic system, but it in no way roots or founds it. The Stoics consider that there are three different kinds of entry point into the philosophical investigation of reality, but it is not these three different aspects of the investigation that make reality systematic, or as we shall start saying: *systematic* (shifting, that is, to the transliterated Greek for ‘*συστηματικόν*’, to distinguish the Stoic notion from the misleading connotations and amalgamations covered by the English word). By reconsidering, radically, the origins and grounds for a *systematic* account of reality in Stoicism, what comes to the fore is a commitment not merely to every notion or thing discussed having a place on the map, but to each and every thing on the map being related to every other thing on the map, in a more or less direct web of interrelations. On this reading of the *systema*, there is not so much room for developmental growths of theories, since alterations in one area impact directly on other areas. The *systema* is thus a fine-tuned structure. It is on the ways in which the constituents are interrelated that theories can become increasingly precise and develop. But no component of this structure can be isolated and relegated to a circumscribed area. In this light, *lekta*, which seem to appear in disparate contexts of discussions, are suddenly revealed, not as marginal eccentricities, but as properly emblematic of the Stoic *systema*.

A full account of the status and role of *lekta* will solidify as the inquiry deepens and extends to each and every context of discussion throughout the book. But this account of *lekta* follows from a thorough reappraisal of some of the pillars of core Stoic doctrine. It is not by chance that *lekta* appear in many and most of the foundational Stoic theories. Neither is it by chance that they appear to be playing a number of different roles—in physics, as effects of causes; in epistemology, as characterizing our relation to the content of our thoughts; in language, as what there is to say, and what we get said. They are

structural items; by this I mean that they are part of the structure of reality. It is laying bare this structure which is the primary aim of this book. In analysing the peculiar, idiosyncratic, and complex account of this structure, the nature, role, and central place of *lekta* is revealed.

One point of entry will be to analyse the unique Stoic reaction to Platonic Forms, because, generation after generation, the Stoics keep the debate about them alive. This reaction is often singled out as a flat rejection of the Forms. This rejection, however, must be placed in a broader context of discussion, a context in which the rejection of the Forms leaves gaping holes in a comprehensive account of reality, which the Stoics will fill with the newly discovered *lekta*. The critical dialogue with Platonism thus constitutes a crucial background from which the notion of a *lekton* develops. In this perspective, the *lekta* are the Stoics' answer to the Platonic Forms. Though the Stoics reject the reality of the Forms, the Stoic analysis of the various roles and foundational contributions of the Forms to the framework of reality leads to the re-interpretation of that framework with the introduction of *lekta* into ontology. The introduction of *lekta* as ontological items leads the Stoics to tackle complexities, some of which are born out of the need to remedy or overcome the difficulties met by the presence of Platonic Forms. For this reason it is not surprising that throughout antiquity, especially in doxographical reports, the Stoics are identified as having introduced *lekta* into ontology, in contrast with Plato, who is characterized through his introduction of the Forms, and Aristotle, characterized through his introduction of substances. These reports are condensed and therefore appear as caricatural highlights of doctrines. Yet they provide sufficient indications that the history of philosophy in antiquity recognizes *lekta* as on a par, in terms of ontological innovation (or even revolution—however aborted or successful the revolution might be subsequently judged), with Plato's Forms, or Aristotle's substances. If the *lekta* are to the Stoics what the Forms are to Plato and Platonism, they are indeed fundamental elements of the Stoic account of reality. The close examination of a wide variety of texts and contexts of discussion in this book will corroborate the doxographers' summary. At the same time it will expose the great complexity which hides behind the seeming simplicity of what is presented as stereotypical of Stoic doctrine.

0.1. A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN TEXTS

It is the texts which bring this view to light. The main source-texts at our disposal are compendia of doctrine, written and collated many centuries after the third-century BC establishment of the Stoic school, that is to say, of Stoic doctrine. There is a consistency of Stoic doctrine through the generations of

the school's figureheads: this is reflected both when, in the ancient commentators and critics, a standard doctrine is described under the banner of 'The Stoics say that', and also when, in the very same witness-authors, different names are attached to specific theories which consolidate Stoic doctrine. Thus the consistency of the doctrine relies on the principles of systematicity set out from the very foundations of the school. That is why it is not completely hopeless to read a late second-century AD compendium of Stoic philosophy in order to establish a reliable basis for the doctrine of third-century BC philosophers.

At the same time, to counter the tragic loss of the many hundreds of books and treatises by Zeno, Cleanthes, Chrysippus, and Sphaerus, to name the founding fathers of the Stoic school—books whose titles are known to us thanks to later bibliographies—we have a vast number of quotations from these works, with specific attributions. Throughout this book, whenever it is possible to identify the specific contribution of one philosopher in particular, we shall be able to question and analyse the relation of this contribution to what is reported of 'The Stoics' in general. The quotations from named works and authors, along with the comments made directly on them in the texts in which they appear, with *ad hominem* attacks, help consolidate a picture in which core tenets are explained and interpreted. These precious quotations confirm, and also put in perspective, the authority of the compendia of doctrine, as they enable us to measure the distance between a standard established view and the debates around it—which, in many or most cases, include discussions of how a particular tenet fits into the systematic account. In many cases the attacks on the Stoics target precisely this latter question, namely how a specific point or theory seems to clash and disrupt the consistency of the whole. Because this is a repeated point of attack—and also because very often what we have is only the critics' side of the debate and their attempts to muffle the voice of the Stoics—we begin to see, through familiarity with the texts and authors, that consistency with the *systema* is crucial for the Stoics. Whether they are successful or not at maintaining it is one question. But that they were intent on it is an aspect of their doctrine that, when it comes to examining the theory of *lekta*, can never be side-lined.

Thus, if we find in Diogenes Laertius such-and-such a claim held by 'The Stoics', which is then echoed in other texts, credited to a specific philosopher, in what appears to be a quotation with added commentary, providing both more detail and a context of critical debate, it is illuminating through a mechanism of mutual reflections. For we are able to ascertain what is standard, and why it became standard. Furthermore, in the light of the elements not found in Diogenes, we can see what ignited debate, and what the specific philosopher in question—often Chrysippus—was concerned to clarify and expand that led, in its later reception, to questions and doubts about consistency and viability.

Diogenes Laertius' *Life and Doctrine of Illustrious Philosophers* in ten books (D.L. for short) composed towards the end of the second century AD, is one of these precious compendia of doctrine. In the pages that follow, the initials D.L. will crop up constantly. D.L. book 7 is not precious because of any detailed argumentation it provides: it provides hardly any. But what it does give us are the mainstream tenets and the grounds for the consistency binding different contexts of discussion and topics. D.L. himself says he is copying or reporting presentations of doctrine from a cluster of, if not direct, then genealogically reliable Stoic sources.¹¹ Alongside D.L., another pair of initials which pepper almost every page of this book are S.E., which stand for Sextus Empiricus, probably a generation or so older than D.L., enough for the latter to name S.E. as one of the most recent Sceptic philosophers in a genealogy of Sceptics, from teacher to pupil, which D.L. gives at the end of his book 9 devoted to the Sceptics.¹² S.E. launches a thorough attack on the positions of all the 'dogmatist' philosophers, who are all the non-sceptical philosophers, and amongst whom are the Stoics. Particularly with reference to discussions of *lekta*, many passages in S.E. echo passages from D.L., differing only in that where D.L. gives us the main elements of doctrine, S.E. more often presents them in order all the better to attack them.

The strategies and success of these attacks vary from point to point. It is the reader's responsibility to be particularly alert to the breaking-points at which doctrine is infused with interpretation from the outside, derived from ideological antagonism, and/or a move towards simplification and amalgamation with other 'dogmatic' theories; at times, the texts bear evidence of plain misunderstanding of the original Stoic theory. A corpus of texts presenting similar challenges are certain works by Plutarch, who reveals precise knowledge of Stoic doctrine and direct knowledge of works by specific philosophers—he quotes a great deal from Chrysippus. But he is on ideological overcharge in discussing Stoic doctrine, defending Platonism and attempting to corner the Stoics at every step for inconsistency and less originality than advertised. Plutarch aims to unmask the Stoics as much closer to Plato than they claim.

Another group of texts, which is crucial and at the same time cannot be taken as direct testimonials of a core Stoic doctrine, are the Roman authors, in particular Cicero and Seneca, who have different relations to the Greek Stoics: the first as an interested and erudite historian of philosophy and commentator on the history of philosophy; the second as an important figurehead of the Stoic school. Seneca's texts are open battlegrounds in which his interpretations of and contributions to doctrine are more or less covert attempts to break

¹¹ For a succinct and comprehensive overview of D.L.'s sources see GOULET 1999 pp.775–88.

¹² See D.L. 9.116 and for an overview of what we know of S.E.'s *floruit* see ANNAS & BARNES 2000 intro. esp. pp.xi–xiv.

loose from a Stoic mould, to which, at the same time, his commitments to Stoic doctrine confine him. He exemplifies and discusses explicitly how these commitments include a respect for the systematicity of the account and how certain proposals and alterations destroy it. Seneca's discussion of *lekta*, which is mainly to be found in *Letter 117 to Lucilius*, will be discussed in detail here. In light of Seneca's attempts to minimize the importance of the distinct status of *lekta*, the crisis of the viability of *lekta* is amplified, as it is posed from within the Stoic ranks.

There are two other groups of texts which play a role in thickening and consolidating the debates around *lekta* and the structure of reality which they ground. They are the doxographical texts and the Aristotelian commentaries. The first are collections of quotations, or collections of collections, and summaries of specific theories. The name of Stobaeus (Stob.), who is John of Stobi and whose *floruit* is set indeterminately within the fifth century AD, appears often in these pages, as also do references to a collection entitled *Placita* (i.e. tenets, or opinions) collated by Pseudo-Plutarch, some of which are also attributed to Aetius. The accounts found in both texts are sometimes parallel and often complete one another with a surplus of detail in one or the other text. These compilations of elements of doctrine on every topic of philosophy often provide us with names of philosophers and their specific contributions. They are listed with plethoric accumulation, such as to give weight to, and confirm, school tenets, which are shown to be expanded on by the members of the school.¹³ The last large group of texts is the commentaries on Aristotle. The discussion of *lekta* in this corpus is doubly complex and rich, since through it, it is also the Peripatetics' relation to Platonism which is articulated, in a critical response to how the Stoics position themselves in a critical debate with Platonism. The Stoics do not straightforwardly reject the Platonic framework, neither in terms of its logical and ontological principles, nor with regard to Plato's pioneering work on semantic theory, in particular in the *Sophist*. But the Peripatetics reclaim Plato to their own tradition of thought by assimilating and reshaping Platonic tenets. Some of this work of re-elaboration and adaptation is set against the Stoic approach to Plato, especially (for our purposes here) when it comes to notions of incorporeality, the status of properties, and the production of meaningful speech, including the status and composition of the proposition. These nodal points of debate constitute central debates in the book from which the role the Stoics give to *lekta* comes out as much more important and relevant than it has been deemed in past studies.

One last author deserves to be named here as he plays a role in our investigation as a clear contrast to the Stoics; this is Epicurus, along with his followers. Ancient historiography, from early on, pairs the Epicureans with the

¹³ See MANSFELD & RUNIA 2009 pp.3–16 on 'Strategies of Presentation'.

Stoics on account of both their rejection of the Platonic Forms and a presumed shared commitment to materialism, or the claim that only what is material exists. The case made in these pages for the prominent role of *lekta* makes a severe, if not definite dent in that story, but what is more important is how differently the Stoics and the Epicureans treat the status of incorporeality. It is Epicurus' views on the incorporeal which also, by contrast, help us confirm and clarify the views of the Stoics on this status.

0.2. A SUMMARY OF THE CONTENT OF THE CHAPTERS

In order to keep to the most neutral and unprejudiced reading possible, a first task is to reveal the biased and programmatic approach to the Stoics, both amongst the ancient commentators and the moderns. One of the most binding considerations relates to what it means for the Stoics to have a systematic philosophical account, since, as we have seen, one's conclusions on the matter lead to very different expectations from an analysis of *lekta*, as either a niche and, however incongruous, still innocuous theory developed as a sub-part of dialectic, or a theory with an utterly different degree of relevance to everything within the system. For this reason, the first chapter of this book is a detailed analysis of the notion of a *systema* for the Stoics. It divides into two parts: the first is a discussion which calls into question the importance of one of the most well-known tenets of Stoicism, namely that the systematicity of philosophy relies on its division into three parts. A conflation is shown to be made in the ancient historiography on the question, which is echoed in a dominant twentieth-century interpretation, between questions pertaining to ordinary teaching, teaching methodology, transmission of doctrine, and the question of the structure of reality. In the second part, I argue, against this tradition, for a shift in perspective, looking closely at a number of texts in which the Stoic notion of a *systema* is set out in terms which have nothing to do with three parts and everything to do with a structure of interdependent co-constitutive components. *Lekta* are barely mentioned in this first chapter. By the end of it, however, certain expectations and requirements are formulated for what it is to be a constitutive component of the *systema*—requirements which we shall see are fulfilled by *lekta*, as one kind of incorporeal, alongside corporeal things.

Chapters 2 to 5 respond to these expectations. In chapter 2, *lekta* are discussed properly for the first time. They are discussed first in response to their collocation within dialectic. The place of *lekta* on the schematic map of philosophical analysis is discussed with relation to the items they are closest to, within the concerns of dialectic. Two central characterizations of the *lekton* are thus examined: on the one hand, as 'that which corresponds to our thoughts' and on the other, as a kind of 'thing signified'. For both the mental impressions

(which are thoughts in the case of rational beings) and the semantic tie between signifiers and things signified are present in the context of dialectic. The Stoics make it clear that there is a distinction between our impressions, which are our thoughts, and *lekta*, which, though they relate to our thoughts, are not our thoughts. Thoughts are corporeal; *lekta* are incorporeal. Thoughts are the products of our mental operations; *lekta* cannot be dependent on our personal mental capacities since they are not personal but can be shared by all of us; they are grasped, not produced. They are, moreover, what is signified by what signifies, in a way which is independent of the language used, to the extent at least that languages can differ, or even not be understood, and still the *lekton*, expressed, say, in a foreign tongue, remains there, available to be grasped, as the *lekton* it is though no one present may understand that language. *Lekta* are, in view of this, also the kind of thing which is taught when we learn things, since it is that which is there to be grasped. The constellation of notions to investigate is thus set out: thought, language, reason, and learning.

Chapter 3 treats the question of the corporeal and the incorporeal by analysing the Stoic account of activity and passivity. A theory of conjunction of two bodies is set out as a condition for activity and passivity. This leads to examining the notion of body in Stoicism, which is shown to be the result of an extremely fine-grained reception and interpretation of Platonic ontology. In parallel to the Stoic analysis, our texts emphasize the influence on the Stoics of the kinds of role reserved in ontology to incorporeals. Whereas a number of commentators assimilate the Stoic incorporeals with Platonic incorporeals (which are the Forms), the Stoics in fact make distinctions between mind-dependent concepts and the mind-independent status of the incorporeals. In particular, mind-dependent generic concepts are distinguished from incorporeal states-of-affairs, i.e. *lekta*, themselves distinct from bodies.

Following from this, chapter 4 focuses on the Stoic notion of rationality, starting from the question of ordinary teaching. The Stoic answer that it is *lekta* that get taught is discussed in relation to the Stoic theory of the necessary development of reason in human beings. Not a single one of us can avoid becoming rational. Since, at the same time, it is extremely unlikely a single one of us will ever become wise, i.e. have knowledge, i.e. be good (since ‘to become wise is as rare as the phoenix’¹⁴), rationality is not a prize earned at the end of a long and arduous sacrifice to study. It characterizes the way a human mind relates to the surroundings of the body it animates. In sum, it characterizes the way the human mind relates to *lekta*, since the mind grasps states-of-affairs which make up the structure of reality. These structures are there to be said, and therefore are called ‘*lekta*’. The Stoics still have to answer a very delicate

¹⁴ See Sen. *Ep.* 42.1.

question: how does a corporeal mind come into a relation with an incorporeal *lekton*, such that the mind can think of the *lekton*. The Stoics discuss, in this respect, a distinction between different ways of receiving an impression and relating to its content. The original suggestion put forward in this chapter is that the Stoics have a theory of the capacity for attention of the rational mind, which is a capacity to grasp *lekta*. It is this capacity which guarantees that we make progress and can get better at discerning what is true from what is false.

Chapter 5 examines the role of language. It examines in detail the distinction between what gets said and what is uttered. We see that ‘saying’, ‘*legein*’ in Greek, is considered by the Stoics as very different from the use of a language. There is a deep sense of saying, which is shown to have, once again, a Platonic affiliation. The connotations of this understanding of ‘saying’ are the roots of the notion of the Stoic *lekton*. It is there to be said, but it is the *lekton* it is, regardless of anyone ever expressing it. This opens up the discussion to the ontological status of the *lekton*.

Chapter 6 is thus devoted to the question of ontological status. If the *lekton* is the thing it is regardless of being expressed by a corporeal voice, and it is there to be said or thought independently of anyone ever thinking it, then what is a *lekton*? where is it? Just as we cannot help but become rational, we cannot help but say things, and what we get said are *lekta*. A certain tradition of modern interpretation has recognized in this relation of ours to *lekta* the ancient sparks of modern speech act theory. A detailed critique of this tempting *rapprochement* is offered, all the better to highlight the very different perspective the Stoics have on the matter. Language, for the Stoics, is at the service of ontological structure and not vice versa. In this chapter, the Stoic position is analysed through the fundamental debate it triggers with its rivals. The Peripatetics launch repeated attacks on the possibility of the reality of *lekta*. Arguments from redundancy, to the acknowledgement that allowing for the reality of *lekta* implies a total and radical shift in ontological framework, help us get an ever more solid understanding of the importance of the *lekta* for the Stoic *systema*. The Epicurean account is also brought forward in this debate about the reality of *lekta*. For the Epicureans, the debate is about what place there is for the incorporeal in the sensible world. Only the void is ultimately accepted as both real and incorporeal. This frames, by contrast, the Stoic position, and confirms the tightness of the Stoic system. Every single thing which is real, i.e. mind-independent, is constitutive of reality: there are thus four and only four incorporeals (time, space, void, and *lekta*), which share the same status and the same primordial constitutive role, along with the corporeals.

Chapter 7 examines a proof, not only of the reality of *lekta*, but of their being a necessary part of the foundations of the system. The proof consists of the Stoic causal analysis. Zeno says that a cause is a body which is the cause of an incorporeal *katēgorēma* obtaining. The distinction between an active body,

discussed in chapter 3, and the incorporeal *katēgorēma* it causes is examined in detail. In particular, the conjunction of two bodies as a condition for the activity of the one and the passivity of the other is now ordered in terms of the relation of the active and passive bodies to the incorporeal *katēgorēma*. This relation is shown to be a relation of attribution which mirrors the propositional structure, the grasping of which characterizes our rationality, as developed earlier in chapter 4. To fully understand what is at stake, the debate between the Peripatetics and the Stoics on causation is examined. The debate develops the fundamental incompatibilities of the Stoic and Peripatetic world view. The Peripatetics cannot recognize *lekta* as additional items in reality. There are no such things, for the Peripatetics, as distinct states-of-affairs, e.g. that Socrates is wise—which is distinct from the property wisdom. But for the Stoics, what a cause does is validate, through its activity, the reality of a state-of-affairs, e.g. in virtue of a motor's running, it is the case that the car is moving, a state-of-affairs. Therefore states-of-affairs are real, and causes cause them to be the case. Being the case, or obtaining (*huparchein*) is a mode of reality which incorporeals have. When they do not obtain, the Stoics say that they subsist. The distinction between obtaining and subsisting is discussed, ultimately defending a view according to which these states are not inferior or dependent on bodies (which exist), but rather are parallel modes of reality.

A *katēgorēma* is a kind of *lekton*. Chapter 8 examines the relation of the *katēgorēma* to the *axiōma* through an analysis of the relation of attribution. This relation is articulated in a well-known passage from S.E., which in most studies is referred to as the text in which we are told *lekta* are distinct from expressions and from the external object they are about. What is examined in this chapter is not so much the distinction of the *lekton* from what expresses it—which has been argued for in chapters 2, 4, and 5. The focus of attention is rather the notion of a case-bearer, the proposed translation for the Greek '*tunchanon*', which is shown to be distinct from the external object. The *tunchanon*, or case-bearer, is the intermediary between the *lekton* (in which a *katēgorēma* is said of (paradigmatically) a case-*ptōsis*) and that in respect of which we are asserting something. The view set out in these pages is that the *katēgorēma* is always attributed, because this is what it is to be part of the structure of reality: an incorporeal state-of-affairs is always a state in which something is attributed to something else. That this something else is expressed, is merely a question of our expressing it or not, or our knowing it or not. The *katēgorēma* is thus a *lekton* because it is one part of a fundamentally complete and nuclear structure, which guarantees the unity of the *lekton*. An incomplete *lekton* is thus a question of which part of the *lekton* gets expressed when we speak.

Chapter 9 goes further into the unity of the *lekton* and the questions this raises with regard to its internal composition. The centrality of the *axiōma* is reappraised, not only in view of its being the *lekton* which is either true or false,

but in light of the discussion in the previous chapter, as that which asserts the propositional structure, characteristic of all states-of-affairs. It is argued that all other kinds of complete *lekta* are surplus to structural requirements and are thus functions of the *axiōma*. The notion of incompleteness only becomes relevant when elements necessary for the constitution of the *axiōma* appear to be missing. Following from the previous chapter, the *katēgorēma* is argued to be the only possible kind of incomplete *lekton*, after a detailed examination of the other candidates for the necessary elements for the constitution of the *axiōma*. The other candidate for that title is the *ptōsis*, but it is not the only one. The analysis tackles the question at a deeper level of ontological structure: what can be the ontological status of the *ptōsis* or whichever other candidate there is, which, together with the *katēgorēma*, constitutes an *axiōma*? The answer proposed is that the *ptōsis* is entirely dependent on the requirements of the *katēgorēma* and is nothing at all in itself.

Lekta are, as the title of this book suggests, all there is to say, because they are all there is in reality, there to be said. To defend this view, it is indeed the whole of the ontological framework of Stoic doctrine that is set out in these pages. There is, however, naturally still much more to be said with regard to the further implications in more specific contexts of this re-valued status and presence of the *lekta* in ontology. I do not therefore discuss the further implications in, for example, the Stoic theory of action and of desires: such discussions follow from the detailed treatment of Stoic causation and the relation of dependency of the *ptōsis* on the *katēgorēma*. Neither will the reader find here a discussion of non-simple *axiōmata* and generally of rules for inference and validity of arguments, though I discuss (in 9.1.5) what the Stoics mean by considering a whole argument as one *lekton*. In the appendix I give an example of the relevance of the Stoic account of *lekta* beyond Stoic or ancient philosophy, as an original and constructive account of meaning in aesthetics, with a commentary on the cover-photograph.

Unless otherwise stated, all translations from ancient Greek, Latin, and occasionally modern languages are my own. All quoted texts are given in full in their original languages in footnotes. There is thus no prerequisite knowledge of other languages than English needed to follow the progress of the argumentation, since the transliterated terms are, as stated above, terms I propose we adopt into English given that they have no precise equivalents.

1

The Invention of the System

A System is a System is a System

It is well-known that the Stoics have a philosophical system. Indeed, it is a commonplace description of Stoic philosophy to call it ‘systematic’ or to refer to it as a system.¹ There are some grounds for doing this. The main scholarly literature does so by interpreting a founding tenet of Stoicism, namely the foundational tripartition of philosophy into logic, physics, and ethics. The assumption there is that firstly, tripartitioning is a comprehensive division over all there is in philosophy, and secondly, that tripartitioning is a rigorous ordering of parts, both definite and definitive, hence systematic. We shall see here that this is collapsing a surface feature onto a much deeper and complex notion of a system, or, as we shall come to call it with reference to a specific Stoic use, of a *systema*. A notion which we shall see has little or nothing to do with tripartitioning.

1.1. THE CRITIQUE OF TRIPARTITIONING: THREE PARTS DO NOT MAKE A SYSTEM

Tripartitioning gains a wide consensus across the philosophical schools as a mode of presentation of doctrine. S.E., at *M.* 7.16, reports that ‘Xenocrates, the Peripatetics and the Stoics’ divide philosophy into three parts, physics, ethics, and logic. We shall say more about this list in a moment, but one thing is evident, namely that the Stoics do not stand out for their tripartitioning of philosophy, since there are others that do so as well. In effect, as we shall see, it is not tripartitioning which makes Stoic doctrine special in terms of its

¹ See the general introductions and comprehensive studies from the most recent scholarship to the oldest amongst the moderns: e.g. BÉNATOUÏL 2013; IERODIAKONOU 2013; HADOT 1991 p.216; GOLDSCHMIDT 1977; CHRISTENSEN 1962; OGÉREAU 1885.

systematicity or unified account. What is more, when the Stoics talk about their system, it is strikingly not with reference to the division of philosophy into three parts.

The scholarship which generally refers to the Stoic system does not do so with reference to the Stoics' own talk of a system, but rather with reference to a consensual understanding of what a system should amount to: namely, distinct and ordered components (typically three) into which all aspects of doctrine can be neatly fitted. To a great extent, this is what we get with Stoicism—as also with many or most philosophical doctrines. But to identify systematicity in Stoic doctrine through an examination of the Stoic view on tripartitioning is to take a short-cut which tends to trivialize the original Stoic account. It is an account which, in fact, covers a distinctive tessellation, binding each part to the other.

For the Stoics have a notion of a system which they develop through an original and pioneering use of the Greek term *σύστημα*. They thereby refer to a complex of constituents which are correlated in ways that turn out to be independent of a tripartitioning of philosophy. Before fully turning our attention to this original Stoic *systema*, we must first spend some time examining the grounds for the importance accorded to tripartitioning by modern commentators. For nearly all references to the Stoic system in the literature concentrate on the tripartitioning of philosophy. Such an exclusive focus on tripartitioning as the expression of Stoic systematicity produces, not quite an erroneous outline of the Stoic system, but a simplified one. It is a simplification which overlooks the more complex Stoic understanding of reality as a *systema*, in which the presence of *lekta* is foundational. It is also a simplification which has and still does play a role in obfuscating the importance, at a structural, ontological level, of *lekta*. For this reason, the motivations behind the consensus must be meticulously pulled apart before we can devote ourselves to the examination of *lekta*. For they created a narrative which hides some fundamental assumptions the Stoics make about reality which, once brought into the open, make the Stoics' further account of *lekta* much more necessary and plausible than it has often been taken to be.

1.1.1. Tripartitioning of What?

The division of what philosophy is concerned with into three domains (logic, physics, and ethics) appears, to all intents and purposes, to be an orderly way of covering and encompassing the whole of philosophy, by referring every element to one or the other of the divisions. At the same time, tripartitioning preserves the wholeness or unity of philosophy because it is a division into three of a single thing. Now precisely what this one thing is, is a point of contention: what are we talking about when we talk about philosophy and its

being divided into three? Perhaps we are not talking about philosophy at all. Three main answers have been pursued in the literature, depending on different interpretations of the terms used to designate partitioning and the parts themselves: on one interpretation, (i), the Stoics are concerned with philosophical analysis, which is separate from its object of analysis; on another interpretation, (ii), the Stoics are primarily concerned with a certain way of living one's life according to certain patterns of thought, formed on the basis of one's experience of life, which are philosophical because of the direct relation between thought and experience; on a third interpretation, (iii), philosophy for the Stoics is an end to strive for, akin to virtue or wisdom.

The kind of systematicity ascribed to the Stoics alters with each of these paths of inquiry: the alternative is between considering Stoicism to be a system because it is based on a methodological systematicity, i.e. that it is the analysis (or what has been often referred to as 'the discourse about philosophy'), which is systematic and it is thus the analysis which is divided into three parts (this relates to the inquiry set out in (i)); or considering that the systematicity concerns something which characterizes real life. It is thus an ontological, or real, systematicity, according to which the Stoics consider that philosophy is the product or articulation of those patterns of thought which come about through our experience of the world—this relates to the inquiry as set out in (ii) and derivatively also to (iii).

1.1.2. The Analogies for Tripartition

Whether methodological or ontological, one thing appears to be a core determinant for tripartitioning, namely that it divides something which is one and which makes up a whole. The clearest indication of this is the recurring topical set of analogies the Stoics put forward to illustrate tripartitioning. The Stoics compare their tripartite view of philosophy to the parts of an egg whose shell stands for logic, the white for ethics, and the yolk for physics; to a living being whose bones and sinews correspond to logic, the flesh to ethics, and the soul to physics, or to a garden whose encircling fence stands for logic, the earth and plants for physics, and the fruit for ethics.² It is these analogies which elicit the generalized talk of systematicity in the literature in the first place. For it is clear from these analogies that the tripartite division of philosophy—whatever is meant by 'philosophy'—is the division of something which is fundamentally unified. The last of the analogies, that of the garden, appears weak in this regard: a garden is clearly not one thing in the same way

² See D.L. 7.40; S.E. M. 7.17–19.

as a living being or an egg. This is the reason some Stoics rejected the analogy.³ But the very fact that the unsatisfactory garden analogy was eventually added alongside the others shows that the garden nevertheless exemplifies something important: namely that the kind of unity the Stoics are interested in consists in more than mere connections between the parts, but rather a strong interrelation. Being interrelated is thus more than being connected. The underlying feature of tripartition is the interrelatedness of the parts: what belongs to ethics is related to physics which is also related to logic, which itself is related to ethics.

Tripartition is foundational only insofar as it cements the interrelatedness of the parts. Yet both aspects are grounds for controversy for ancient and modern interpreters. The main problem originates with the question of what it is that is divided into three. We have already evoked the broad questions which arise between, schematically put, a methodological reading and an ontological reading. Before we push, in this chapter, for an ontological reading, we must look in depth at the texts and interpretations which ground the controversial state of the question. There are thus two parts to this chapter: the first is a survey of how interpreters of the Stoics, from antiquity to today, consider the Stoics to take the tripartite division of philosophy as fundamental. The Stoics are read, on this interpretation, as having a discursive theoretical approach to philosophy, which is to be distinguished from a philosophical life-practice. The survey shows these assumptions are flawed and misleading and hence the importance given to tripartition on these grounds is misplaced. The second part (1.2 and 1.3) is a constructive analysis of the Stoic system, or rather *systema*, considered without the prejudice from interpreters, ancient and modern, who fixate on tripartition as the grounding element of a philosophical system. The result is a description of an ontological framework which maps onto reality, in which the discursive element is a reflection of the ontological structure, and not something distinct from it. The *lekta* are key to this structure, and also key to the relation of language to ontology. The following chapters will show how *lekta* fulfil these roles.

Amongst the Stoics themselves there is a question about whether the tripartition divides philosophy *simpliciter*, '*hē philosophia*', which is the term invariably used in one of our most comprehensive accounts of tripartition, S.E. M. 7.1–26; or whether it divides 'the discourse about philosophy', which is how the phrase '*ho kata philosophian logos*' is often translated,⁴ as one testimony in D.L. 7.39 would suggest; or whether tripartition is a division

³ S.E. M. 7.19: 'On the grounds that the parts of philosophy are inseparable one from another, whereas plants are considered different from fruit and walls are separate from plants, Posidonius thought it better to compare philosophy to a living being.' See more at 1.3.6 below.

⁴ D.L. 7.39: 'τριμερὴ φασιν φασίν εἶναι τὸν κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν λόγον', 'they say that the discourse concerning philosophy has three parts'.

into ‘the three kinds of objects of study for the philosopher’, as we read in Plutarch.⁵ It is unclear, for lack of determining textual evidence concerning the implications of one or the other expression, how serious the debate on this point is for the Stoics. Is it merely a question of expression, or does the difference in expression imply a difference in referents? In what way would a division of philosophy differ from a division of discourse? Aristotle, for example, in book 1 of the *Topics*, notes that there are three kinds of dialectical proposition (which go on to make up an argumentation, *Top.* 1.14, 105b19–25): ethical, physical, and logical. What distinguishes them, he says, is their subject-matter, which we recognize as belonging to this or that kind, out of familiarity with the themes in question.⁶ Thus, if a proposition has something to do with the cosmos, it is most likely to be a ‘premiss in physics’ (*phusikē protasis*), whereas if the subject-matter is, say, the relation between opposites, it will more likely belong to a problem in logic. There is no place, here, to distinguish between a meta-philosophical discourse about parts of philosophy and philosophy *simpliciter*. The three kinds of topics for dialectical discussion cover generally all the kinds of questions which one discusses, rather than the questions one discusses about philosophy.

True enough, D.L. (at 7.39) speaks of tripartition as a division of the ‘discourse about philosophy’. But it is difficult to read him as reporting a consistent account committed to talk of a discourse about philosophy in contrast to philosophy, since D.L. himself, in the immediately following analysis of the division, rehearsing the analogies mentioned above, reverts to speaking of ‘philosophy’ and not to the discourse about it (D.L. 7.40). Not only is it likely that D.L. does not consider that there is a distinction between philosophy and a discourse about philosophy, but it is also likely that there is in effect no significant difference intended between the expressions ‘*ho kata philosophian logos*’ (‘the discourse about philosophy’) and ‘*hē philosophia*’ (‘philosophy’). D.L. is perhaps not being inconsistent here. It rather is the secondary literature which has wanted to map onto this text a strong contrast between the two expressions. After all—and we shall come back to this point below—though the literature has habitually read ‘*ho kata philosophian logos*’ as ‘the discourse about philosophy’, this is not an accurate translation. The generally accepted translation does not in fact translate ‘*kata philosophian*’ but rather ‘*peri philosophias*’: ‘*kata*’ in Greek is not the same as ‘*peri*’ (about), but indicates a relation of adherence to, or correspondence with (cf. n.49 below). Something more subtle therefore seems to be implied in the Greek, as it is reported by D.L. We shall attempt to bring out the nuance in what follows.

⁵ Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1035A: ‘τρία γένη τῶν τοῦ φιλοσόφου θεωρημάτων’.

⁶ Arist. *Top.* 1.14, 105b27–8: ‘τῇ διὰ τῆς ἐπαγωγῆς συνηθείᾳ πειρατέον γνωρίζειν ἐκάστην αὐτῶν’, ‘we must try to recognize each of them by means of the familiarity and practice of induction’.

1.1.3. A Discourse about Philosophy vs. Philosophy *Simpliciter*: from Plutarch to Hadot

In the passage in *On Stoic Self-Contradictions* mentioned in n.5 above, Plutarch refers to the ‘*theōrēmata* of the philosopher’, translated above as ‘the objects of study for the philosopher’, a phrase which shifts the discussion from what philosophy is, to what a philosopher occupies himself with, or what a philosopher does. And this is a shift Plutarch is all the more eager to make as it enables him to direct yet a further accusation of inconsistency against Chrysippus (with which Plutarch’s work abounds). For what Plutarch retains from the Stoics’ talk of tripartition is that tripartition maps onto these *theōrēmata*, with which the philosopher is concerned. But at the same time, Plutarch notes, Chrysippus states that what a philosopher is concerned with are the ordered contents of a programme of teaching. Plutarch thus superimposes the *theōrēmata* with what the Stoics say is taught and learnt. He justifies doing so because this is what a philosopher is occupied with:

Chrysippus thinks that young people should hear lectures on logic first, on ethics next, and after that on physics and should get to theology last, as the termination for these studies. He says this in many places, but it will suffice to quote the statement in the fourth book on *Ways of Living*, which runs word for word as follows: ‘Now I believe in the first place, conformably with the correct statements of the ancients, that the philosopher’s speculations are of three kinds, logical, ethical, and physical; then, that of these, the logical must be placed first, the ethical second, and the physical third; and that of physical speculations, theology must be last, which is why its transmission has also been called “final initiation”.’⁷

The translation for ‘*theōrēmata*’ offered by Cherniss as ‘the philosopher’s speculation’ runs the risk of making an over-interpretative step—at least from the Plutarchian perspective. For it implies that there is, on the one hand, the sphere of speculation and inquiry (the *theōrēmata*), which the philosopher engages in (and which takes three main directions), and on the other hand, a question of teaching, which involves the ordering of a curriculum. We shall end up corroborating this account of Chrysippus’ position (with the support of other texts). But it is not clear that Plutarch is taking Chrysippus to be saying as much; nor is it clear that, at least in these lines, this is

⁷ Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1035A (trans. Cherniss, slightly modified): “Ο Χρύσιππος οἶεται δεῖν τῶν λογικῶν πρῶτον ἀκροᾶσθαι τοὺς νέους δεύτερον δὲ τῶν ἠθικῶν μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τῶν φυσικῶν, ὡς ἂν τέλος δὲ τούτοις τὸν περὶ θεῶν λόγον ἔσχατον παραλαμβάνειν. πολλοῦ δὲ τούτων ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ λεγομένων ἀρκέσει παραθέσθαι τὰ ἐν τῷ τετάρτῳ περὶ Βίων ἔχοντα κατὰ λέξιν οὕτως: “πρῶτον μὲν οὖν δοκεῖ μοι κατὰ τὰ ὀρθῶς ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχαίων εἰρημένα τρία γένη τῶν τοῦ φιλοσόφου θεωρημάτων εἶναι, τὰ μὲν λογικὰ τὰ δ’ ἠθικὰ τὰ δὲ φυσικὰ· εἴτα τούτων δεῖν τάττεσθαι πρῶτα μὲν τὰ λογικὰ δεύτερα δὲ τὰ ἠθικὰ τρίτα δὲ τὰ φυσικὰ· τῶν δὲ φυσικῶν ἔσχατος εἶναι ὁ περὶ τῶν θεῶν λόγος· διὸ καὶ τελετὰς προσηγόρευσαν τὰς τούτου παραδόσεις.”

what Chrysippus has in mind. For there is a question about the ‘then’ (*eita*) at mid-quotation, introducing ‘*then, that of these, the logical kind must be placed first ...*’. It is a consecutive coordinator, which markedly connects the previous clause to the next one; it is reinforced by the use of the genitive partitive of the anaphoric pronoun ‘*toutōn*’ (‘of these’) to introduce a verb expressing necessity, which itself introduces the verb indicating the order to establish amongst those things previously referred to. These are all indications that this second clause follows from, and is referentially dependent on the first clause, in which the *theōrēmata* are divided into three kinds.

But the question is whether the second clause is chronologically (and contextually) consecutive or conceptually consecutive? That is to say: either Chrysippus is agreeing with ‘the ancients’ that there are, generally speaking, three fields of inquiry open to the philosopher and that, subsequently, i.e. derivatively, when it comes to teaching, these three fields are to be ordered in a certain way. Or Chrysippus is saying that when ‘the ancients’ speak of the three kinds of *theōrēmata*, he assumes they are talking about an educational programme whose headings he generally agrees with, but has his own conception of how the programme is to be ordered. These are questions for a philosophical historiography of philosophy, some aspects of which will be considered further below (1.2.1). But of first importance here is what Plutarch thinks Chrysippus is saying. Plutarch is clearly intent on taking Chrysippus—whom Plutarch makes an emphatic show of quoting *ipsissima verba*—to be discussing pedagogy and referring tripartition to a programme of study. For this reason, the ‘*theōrēmata*’ of the philosopher, rather than Cherniss’s ‘speculations’, correspond more to ‘objects of study’—a translation which is an attempt at a greater fidelity to Plutarch’s understanding of the term and his own representation of Chrysippus here.

This is important, not because Plutarch is particularly insightful here (it will be shown that he is not) but because he crystallizes a trend in the analysis and critique of the Stoics, which has proponents in influential scholarship of the twentieth century. For Plutarch’s representation of Chrysippus and the Stoics is the basis for the far-reaching account offered by Pierre Hadot which, with its aspirations towards general views about philosophy in antiquity, has in turn contributed to an overall view of ancient philosophy as the self-aware application of theory in practice. This is Hadot’s trademark banner of philosophy as a ‘spiritual exercise’.⁸ Hadot is keen to make a distinction between the teaching or the theorems concerning logic, ethics, and physics (his translation for the *theōrēmata* is in fact, ‘*les théorèmes du philosophe*’) and philosophy *simpliciter* which is whole and unified.⁹ He relies for this distinction mostly on our

⁸ A perspective which permeates Hadot’s works in ancient philosophy, but is articulated programmatically with regard to the status of the parts of philosophy in HADOT 1981 and 1995.

⁹ HADOT 1991 on this passage from Plutarch but already in HADOT 1979 p.210f.

Plutarch passage and on later Roman Stoics, especially Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. That the texts and authors he appeals to belong to a later stage of the development of Stoicism is not mere chance. For the distinction between teaching and practising is made in these texts in connection with an emphatic insistence on philosophy as a practice or *askēsis*.¹⁰ The emphasis on the latter is in effect brought out through a contrast with the presentation of the theoretical principles.

However, it is far less obvious that the concern about such a double standing—theoretical and practical—in philosophy is of great significance in the earlier Stoic sources, or at least, not as much as it was to become. It rather seems that for the earlier Stoics, talk of *theōrēmata* does not separate the theoretical from the practical, but rather identifies what a thing is. The virtues, for instance, have all their *theōrēmata* in common, i.e. all their principles in common,¹¹ by which we are to understand that we cannot have one without having the others—no one is courageous without also being temperate and just. This binding connection to the shared principles is what pinpoints a certain understanding of ‘virtue’ as moral virtue, as opposed to other forms of excellence or perfection (*teleiōsis*). It is thus not *theōrēmata*, principles,¹² which make some virtues theoretical and others not, such as health, which is non-theoretical (*atheōrētos*), in contrast to prudence (*phronēsis*) which is theoretical.¹³ But it is the *theōrēmata* which ground the nature of moral virtues, which Hecato calls ‘theorematical’ (*θεωρηματικά*, D.L. 7.90). The *theōrēmata*, the principles, thus do not belong to the theoretical as opposed to the practical, but set out the foundations for the moral virtues, which subsequently have both theoretical and practical expressions when it comes to choosing the right thing to do and acting accordingly.¹⁴ Panaetius is the earliest Stoic thinker reported to have appealed to a dichotomy between

¹⁰ One example out of many: Epict. *Diss.* 2.9.13–14: ‘the philosophers state that it is not enough only to learn (*μὴ ἀρκεῖσθαι μόνῳ τῷ μαθεῖν*), but to learning is added use and practice (*καὶ μελέτην προσλαμβάνειν, εἶτα ἄσκησιν*)’. See REYDAMS-SCHILS 2010 also on Musonius Rufus in the same vein, and BOYS-STONES 2007 on Cornutus.

¹¹ D.L. 7.125: ‘εἶναι γὰρ αὐτῶν τὰ θεωρήματα κοινά, καθάπερ Χρῦσιππος ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ περὶ Ἀρετῶν φησὶν...’; the list of Stoics goes on to mention Apollodoros and Hecato. See also Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.5b5.1–2.

¹² Cic. *Fat.* 11 translates *theōrēmata* by ‘percepta’ (“percepta” appello quae dicuntur Graece “θεωρήματα”) from the supine of *percipere* (to gain through learning) to indicate thus what has been gained, namely rules or principles on the basis of which a practitioner (*artifex*) finds his art: hence Cicero asks, ‘If indeed, there is such a thing as the art of divination, on the basis of which *percepta* does this proceed?’ (*Fat.* 11). It is also as grounding principles that Epictetus understands ‘θεωρήματα’ when he asks ‘what are the *theōrēmata* of philosophy?’ and answers ‘it is not the principles according to which one should wear a dirty coat and have a long beard, but that of coming to know the elements of reason’ (Epict. *Diss.* 4.8.12). See 2.1.1 below on this passage.

¹³ D.L. 7.90.

¹⁴ D.L. 7.126: ‘τὸν γὰρ ἐνάρετον θεωρητικὸν τε εἶναι καὶ πρακτικὸν τῶν ποιητέων’, ‘a virtuous person is at once able to think up and put into practice what he ought to do’.

theoretical and practical virtues (D.L. 7.92) though the purport of the division is far from clear: is it cohesive or divisive?¹⁵

It is in effect the richer and more complex connotations underlying the *theōrēmata* that vindicate Chrysippus from Plutarch's accusations of inconsistency. At the same time, they make Hadot's line about the strict application of tripartition to the sole question of teaching (thus leaving philosophy *simpliciter* apart, as a unified block) much more fragile. What Hadot develops from Plutarch is the tendency towards simplification of the Stoic position, starting with the Stoic discussions of tripartition: for Plutarch, if Chrysippus says that (i) there are three kinds of *theōrēmata* (logic, ethics, and physics) and that (ii) to learn Stoic philosophy, one goes from logic first, to ethics, then to physics with theology as the crowning of one's education in physics, then (i) and (ii) are referring to one and the same thing. Plutarch's understanding of the *theōrēmata* is thus close to talk of the *logos* about philosophy: there is a discourse or there are theorems, which are in some way separable from philosophy *simpliciter*.

The *theōrēmata*, according to Plutarch and Hadot (1991) thus generally belong to a question of theory, which is understood to relate to what is taught. The '*logos* about philosophy' is then itself correlated to the sphere of theory, and referred to the question of teaching. As for tripartition, it becomes a tool for the teaching and presentation of the contents of a philosophical programme, ramified and ordered according to sections relative to logic, ethics, and physics. Such is the theory. This leaves philosophy *simpliciter* as a practice, in Hadot's words, a 'way of life'.

1.1.4. Chrysippus Vindicated, or Tripartition Trivialized

However, by unpacking the elements contained in Plutarch's quotation of Chrysippus above, together with Plutarch's subsequent commentary on it, we can see that Chrysippus is saying something quite different; almost the reverse in fact, from what Plutarch wants to make him say. The accusation of self-contradiction lies in this: Chrysippus claims that theology comes last in the order of teaching, but then writes in his ethical works that claims belonging to theology are assumed as fundamental premisses.¹⁶ As proof for the latter,

¹⁵ I.e. are some virtues theoretical, others practical (reading Panetius as a dissident Stoic) or is each virtue both theoretical and practical (in a spirit of expiation on Stoic foundations); cf. ALESSE 1994 p.50ff.

¹⁶ Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1035B: 'Yet this very doctrine, theology, which he says must be put last, he habitually puts first and makes the preface for every ethical inquiry' (trans. Cherniss).

Plutarch quotes from various works by Chrysippus, for instance from book 3 of *On the Gods*, that:

it is not possible to discover any other beginning of justice or any source for it other than from Zeus and universal nature (*koinē phusis*), for from there, everything must have its beginning if we are going to have anything to say about good and evil (Stoic. Rep. 1035C).

It looks as though, for Chrysippus, the fundamentals of physics, ontology, and cosmic order need to be fully set out before broaching questions of ethics. This appears to be at variance with the educational plan according to which physics comes last.

Attempts have been made to justify Chrysippus, against Plutarch, by arguing along the lines of ‘need-to-know’ degrees of awareness and knowledge: the ethical works would not assume knowledge of physics and theology, for though such knowledge is ultimately necessary for a full comprehension of the matter, one can proceed without it.¹⁷ Jacques Brunschwig (1995d) makes, to this end, a brilliant suggestion: that Chrysippus’ treatise *That the ancients rightly admitted dialectic alongside demonstration* dedicated to Zeno of Tarsus (of which we only have the title, recorded at D.L. 7.201) concerns this very question of the role and place of the tripartition. The treatise, Brunschwig shows, was meant to attenuate the exclusivity of the disjunction, namely that either the order of the parts holds, or there is no order at all, and Chrysippus would thus be inconsistent. For what is at stake is the validity of the dialectical exercise, that is, the exercise described for instance in Aristotle’s *Topics* 1.10, by which argumentations can be constructed on the basis of premisses which are merely accepted or agreed upon.¹⁸ In setting the dialectical exercise on a par with demonstration, Chrysippus thereby validates the fluidity of the Stoic approach to tripartition. Chrysippus would thus be saying that in teaching and presenting philosophical doctrine, we can both (i) construct argumentations which proceed from merely agreed upon premisses—this is the dialectical method—and (ii) that we can also deduce the whole of Stoic doctrine from an a priori grasp of the ontological structure, or from the place of man in the cosmos. On the former methodology, for (i), we can fully rehabilitate, *contra* Plutarch, the ethical works premised by tenets from physics. With the method of demonstration, for (ii), we can grasp the full significance of the

¹⁷ ANNAS 1993 pp.164–6; BRUNSCHWIG 1995d pp.247–50. Plutarch gives three quotations from different works by Chrysippus; in two out of three, Chrysippus suggests that the best and only properly thorough way of going about a study of ethics is with reference to physical doctrine, but the best does not mean the only: there are other ways to make modest progress in ethics, or to affirm, at least temporarily, some points on the basis of a partial reference to some elements of physical doctrine.

¹⁸ See BRUNSCHWIG 1967 intro., KULLMAN 2012 esp. pp.297–9, and BABUT 2005 emphasizing the role of dialectic as purely at the service of defence of dogma.

ethical works, i.e. once we have been taught all of the programme of philosophy and are capable of grasping all the principles. After all, famously, all Chrysippus wanted of his teacher Cleanthes was to be ‘taught the *dogmata*’ (which we recognize as variations on the *theōrēmata* mentioned by Plutarch), and that ‘he would find out for himself the proofs’, i.e. the demonstrations from which the whole of Stoic doctrine can be deduced.¹⁹

To take Brunschwig’s suggestion one step further—and this independently from the discussion of Chrysippus’ treatise—what Chrysippus is actually saying is that tripartition is neither a fundamental element of doctrine, nor merely a pedagogical tool, disposable after it has fulfilled its use. For nothing of philosophical importance hangs on tripartition given that, when it comes to engaging in philosophical inquiry, as in actually ‘saying something about good and evil’ (from the *Stoic. Rep.* 1035C quote above), the borders between the three parts dissolve as if they were not there (to Plutarch’s indignation).²⁰

The most important questions of philosophy turn out to be rooted in all of the parts: this much is clear, for instance, from what we have as the beginning of Cicero’s *De Fato* (*Fat.* 1).²¹ Cicero relates, referring to characteristic Greek Stoic terminology, that the question of fate is a question of ethics, of logic, and

¹⁹ D.L. 7.179: ‘πρὸς Κλεάνθην, ᾧ καὶ πολλάκις ἔλεγε μόνῃς τῆς τῶν δογμάτων διδασκαλίας χρῆξιν, τὰς δὲ ἀποδείξεις αὐτὸς εὐρήσειν’.

²⁰ There is a touch of irony in Chrysippus’ calling the final study of theology by the religious-ritualistic term ‘τελεται’ (from Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1035A, quoted above with n.7) which I translate as ‘final initiation’ (where Cherniss has ‘confirmation’). Plutarch underlines what he takes to be an abuse of nomenclature as he comes back to this desacralized denomination at 1035E: not only is Chrysippus usurping a word reserved for religious rituals, re-charting it to refer to Stoic theology, a branch of physics, but he does not even stick to the hierarchy, which the word implies, as the crowning of a religious initiation. It is with a similar touch of irony and seriousness that Diotima tells Socrates in Plato’s *Symposium* (210a1) that she will try to lead him to the final initiation (‘τὰ τέλεα’) and even ‘ἐποπτεία’ (the highest stage of initiation) revealing Beauty itself. Plutarch, we know, is particularly attached to this passage (210a) from the *Symposium* and to the description of ‘the pure truth’ Socrates is set to be initiated into, as we read in his *Iside* 382D. In discussing Chrysippus’ usurpation of the term for initiation, there is thus a further defence of Platonism in Plutarch’s critique of Chrysippus. For an initiation involves the Ideas (which are beyond matter and physics) and not revelations about the physical cosmic order. But Chrysippus uses the expression to describe theology—whether in an explicit anti-Platonic stance, or more straightforwardly because he proposes his own notion of God—as is attested by the entry for ‘τελετή’ in the Byzantine *Etymologicum Magnum* (p.751,16 = SVF ii.1008) whose reference to Chrysippus does not seem to rely on Plutarch, but echoes an established Stoic usage, relevant enough to be reported, after a brief mention of the ceremonial mystery rites the term is also used for. BROUWER 2014 p.65 suggests, on the basis of this last piece of evidence, that Chrysippus considered the wise man as an initiate, because the wise are said to be ‘divine’ (D.L. 7.119), but in that passage the adjective is immediately explained as ‘being like a god’ (‘οἷονεὶ θεόν’) which surely makes all the difference—the ‘οἷονεὶ τι’ formula is typical of the Stoics to say that X is like Y but is not really Y (e.g. mental images which are like the things they are images of, but are not the things themselves, D.L. 7.61).

²¹ On the incomplete state of the text see YON 1933 intro. esp. p.xviff.

of physics.²² So intertwined are the different roots of the question of fate that these become irrelevant in discussing and resolving the difficulties concerning fate. But at the same time, though the borders are fluid, they are not non-existent. For one, they serve as a useful tool for transmission and teaching. Moreover, where tripartition seems to count for nothing (in engaging in philosophy proper), it is not that Chrysippus says physics is not distinct from ethics. For when he states that in order to understand good and bad, we need to start with how the cosmos is arranged, he acknowledges that there are tenets in physics that are distinct from claims in ethics. The arrangement of the cosmos is not the same thing as claims about good and bad, though the one cannot be separated from the other. This implies that there is room to speak of the three parts as distinguishable also in contexts which are not purely pedagogical.

What seems therefore to be the most neutral reading of Chrysippus as reported by Plutarch, is that Chrysippus considers that there are two distinct things: the unity of philosophy on the one hand, and the teaching of philosophy on the other. These are two separate questions, though both have recourse, in different ways, to talk of tripartition. When it comes to teaching, he has a view about the order of presentation, but when it comes to ‘saying something’ as Chrysippus is quoted by Plutarch to ‘say something about good and evil’, the unity and inter-relatedness of the parts is an element of what there is to say (e.g. how physics grounds ethics). Therefore, to account seriously (this is the deep sense here of ‘saying something’) for the inter-relatedness of the parts is what it is to engage in this sort of activity, that of accounting for how things are in the world, which is, in effect, what a philosopher does. Brunschwig’s suggestion is co-extensive with this suggestion: for the dialectical exercise he shows Chrysippus to be in favour of incorporates the tripartition at the level of teaching. Thus, for the sake of learning something about ethics, we can assume and agree on a series of claims from physics without proving them. But when it comes to ‘saying

²² The lacuna immediately preceding the beginning of our text which starts in the middle of a sentence surely must have mentioned fate as belonging also to inquiries in physics, as we know from the discussion of fate in Chrysippus’ *On Fate*, mentioned in D.L. 7.149, as also from the way the doxographer Arius Didymus, in Stob. *Ecl.* 1.11.5a.5–7, summarizes the Stoic talk of fate as also a ‘generative seed’. YON 1933 p.xxxv argues against this conjecture but only because he claims that the Stoics did not clearly separate logic from physics, and that causality, which belongs under physics, was treated as a question in logic. But the tradition in antiquity becomes that of underlining the relevance of fate to all three fields. Alex. *Fat.* 169.19 first characterizes fate as properly anchored in the study of nature (*φύσις*) as a cause and ‘what is according to nature-*φύσις*’, after stating that ‘the relevance of the question of fate extends everywhere and to every domain’ (Alex. *Fat.* 164.16–17). The three-way discussion, under physics, ethics, and logic, becomes the norm in introducing any treatise on fate, witness Ps-Plut. *Fat.* 568F: ‘περὶ γὰρ ταύτην [i.e. *εἰμαρμένην*] τὰ πολλὰ ζητήματα φυσικά τε καὶ ἠθικά καὶ διαλεκτικά τυγχάνει ὄντα’, ‘there happen to be many questions concerning fate, in physics, ethics, and dialectic’. On the Stoic roots of the presentation in Cicero, see the tight-knit ties with Chrysippean sources brought to light in BARNES 1985, and the discussion in BOBZIEN 2005 pp.56–8.

something', i.e. the task of the philosopher, demonstration is required, which grounds its proofs on the stable basis of all the principles from all three kinds of inquiry.

1.1.5. Tripartition: Teaching and Transmission

In the image analogies (1.1.2 above), the divergences concerning the order of the parts pertain exclusively to the place of physics and ethics; logic never changes its place. It is the bones and sinews of the living being, the shell of the egg, and the fence of the garden. The images of shell, fence, or bones for logic represent logic as that which holds together, and marks the limits of philosophy. This is the role unilaterally assigned to logic. Thus all our sources converge to indicate logic consistently as the part which preserves and is the marker of the wholeness of philosophy.²³ But when it comes, subsequently, to the question of the educational programme, where we would expect that such unilateral agreement about the place of logic in the analogies would correspond to a unilateral agreement about its place in the curriculum, divergences arise once more. Logic is not considered as necessarily first in the order of teaching, as we might have expected: Zeno of Citium, Chrysippus, Archedemus, and Eudorus think so (D.L. 7.40), but Diogenes of Ptolemais, Panaetius, and Posidonius do not (D.L. 7.41). This is most significant for our present inquiry: for it emphatically brings out the difference between, on the one hand, a foundational and shared view of philosophy as being divided into three according to a rationale for division, and on the other hand, the secondary, and relatively separate, question of teaching and transmission, which arises from very different concerns.

All, or almost all Stoic thinkers, share the view that philosophy is like an egg or living being or a fenced-in garden. That is to say that they consider philosophy to be one thing, whose unity or wholeness is sustained first and foremost through logic and logic's connection with the other parts. But that shared view does not necessarily translate into what these same Stoics think about the order of topics for the purpose of teaching philosophy. The quibbles about the order can only be understood as different opinions about how best to convey the unified wholeness of philosophy, and are therefore necessarily secondary to the main task, which is to articulate the unity of philosophy.

²³ In addition to the testimony constituted by the analogies themselves, logic's fundamentally cohesive and relational role in the tripartition, i.e. that it both grounds the other parts and establishes their interdependence, is confirmed in S.E. *M.* 7.23; Epict. *Diss.* 1.17; Philo *Mut. Nom.* 75. See HADOT 1991 p.210. Seneca in *Ep.* 117 questions the role and necessity of logic, but his rebelliousness in this with regard to the Greek Stoic orthodoxy is but an additional testimony to the immovable status of logic as the backbone of ethics on Stoic doctrine.

In his report about tripartition, D.L. does not talk about teaching but rather about the transmission, or passing down, of doctrine: the term used is '*paradosis*'. The mention of transmission of doctrine appears, what is more, as an afterthought, subsequent to a crucial indication about the relation of the parts to one another:

And no part is separated from another, as some of them say, but they are blended together. And in fact, they used to be passed down blended in this way.²⁴

We understand from this passage that the tripartition precedes questions of how to teach or pass down the relevant contents. Indeed, it precedes the debates, echoed in this passage, concerning the actual relations between the parts (separated, inseparable, blended etc.). For the assumption here is that tripartition is part and parcel of the Stoic view about philosophy. It is on that assumption that there are subsequently some Stoics who emphasize the utter inseparability of the parts by describing the relation as blended. In Plutarch's quotation from Chrysippus mentioned above, Chrysippus does not actually talk about teaching (*didaskalia*) either, but, as here in D.L., of *paradosis*, transmission of doctrine. Here is Chrysippus again:

Now I believe in the first place, conformably with the correct statements of the ancients, that the philosopher's speculations (/objects of study) are of three kinds, logical, ethical, and physical; then, that of these the logical must be placed first, the ethical second, and the physical third; and that of physical speculations, theology must be last, which is why its transmission has also been called 'final initiation'.²⁵

Just as in the previous D.L. quotation, here too, two points are made: firstly, that there are three kinds of speculations or objects of study the philosopher is engaged in; secondly, that when it comes to transmission of doctrine, there is an order to follow. Read together, the two passages map onto one another rather well, suggesting that this was a common way of setting out the question of the status of the parts. A first point notes the pre-established assumption that there are three parts, whether on the authority of 'the ancients', as with Chrysippus, or simply as an understood element of doctrine, as in D.L.'s report. A second, subsequent, point (introduced by 'and in fact' in D.L., by 'then' in Chrysippus) addresses the question of the transmission of doctrine. Plutarch himself says that he chose this quotation of Chrysippus, though he could have cited a number of similar passages: '[Chrysippus] says these things in many places' (*Stoic. Rep.* 1035A), which confirms that D.L.'s report is a condensed version of a standard presentation presumably derived from Chrysippus.

²⁴ D.L. 7.40: 'Καὶ οὐθὲν μέρος τοῦ ἑτέρου ἀποκεκρίσθαι, καθά τινες αὐτῶν φασιν, ἀλλὰ μεμίχθαι αὐτά. καὶ τὴν παράδοσιν μικτὴν ἐποιοῦν.'

²⁵ Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1035A, cf. n.7 above.

There is no indication that with regard to the debate on whether the parts are blended or not, Chrysippus would be amongst the proponents of the parts not being blended. On the contrary, Chrysippus' choice of the expression 'final initiation' (in Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1035A) brings with it connotations of the completion of a whole, as the entry in the *Etymologicum Magnum* emphasizes (cf. n.20 above). There, we are told, with reference to Chrysippus, that the 'final initiation' is final because by then 'the soul has its internal support and is completely strengthened'.²⁶ Strengthening of the soul, for the Stoics, is acquired through the soul's making the relevant moral and epistemic progress—a progress which draws on all fields of inquiry.²⁷ Accordingly, also for Chrysippus, transmission of doctrine is fundamentally conceived as being 'blended', rather than a piecemeal administering of separate elements. The order of learning which he advocates can be seen itself, in the light of this, as the order by which progress is to be made with the aim of ultimately blending all of the acquired parts through the final initiation.

It is, moreover, a well-known doctrine of Stoicism, and of Chrysippus in particular, that a complete blending of parts is conceived of as a blending which goes 'through and through'. A well-known image the Stoics use is the drop of wine which spreads throughout the whole of the ocean. It spreads through and through, but in such a way that, for every blended drop, its wine-constituent and its ocean-constituent are identifiable, not only as distinct from one another, but also as having preserved all the properties which make the one wine and the other ocean.²⁸ Similarly, with the blending of the parts of philosophy in the transmission of doctrine, there is an order of the parts, but it is an order which is designed in view of an ultimate blending—hence the disputes on which order is best.²⁹ Best for what? The discussions about the right order run parallel to the divergencies in the details of the analogies, mentioned above, of the egg and the living being. In some texts it is physics and not ethics which is the white of the egg, and ethics not physics which is the yolk of the egg. Similarly, with the living being analogy, physics and ethics alternatively stand for the flesh or the soul.³⁰ The significance of one or the

²⁶ *Etymologicum Magnum* p.751,16 (= SVF ii.1008): 'τῆς ψυχῆς ἐχούσης ἔρμα καὶ κεκρατημένης'.

²⁷ The soul is in a state of 'strength' and 'stability' when it has unshakeable knowledge: S.E. *M.* 7.151; Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.51.5–6; Ps-Galen *Def. Med.* 19.350.3f. Having knowledge is to live virtuously, 'in agreement with nature', the famous Stoic maxim for the goal of life, see D.L. 7.87; Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.6a. See STRIKER 1996d.

²⁸ D.L. 7.151. The theory becomes all the more crucial when applied to body and soul (D.L. 7.138–9), or passive matter and active principle constituting the cosmos (D.L. 148; Alex. *Mix.* 225.1–2); see ANNAS 1992 p.48f.

²⁹ D.L. 7.40–1; Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1035A.

³⁰ S.E. *M.* 7.18 in contrast with D.L. 7.40. Interestingly, there are no such divergences in the garden analogy reported in both the latter texts and in Philo *Mut. Nom.* 74, which corroborates further the non-Stoic origin of the image (hence not much disputed, but imported as it is): the

other configuration is not our main concern. But what it shows is that the debates about which order of the parts is best are driven by a fundamental concern about the interrelatedness of the parts. For the disagreement concerning the order revolves around the question of which content of which part is most necessary as a basis for the other.³¹

When it comes to the order of the parts, scholarship tends to read the discussions as pertaining to questions of curricula and methods of teaching. The divergences in the configuration, both in the analogies and in the reports about the order of presentation, have been taken as guiding threads for gauging the relative independence of the study of the different parts: for example, the independence of the study of ethics from physics, as famously argued by Julia Annas (1993, 165ff.).³² These discussions turn on how to consolidate an area of study, and how to make progress in the study of philosophy. But Annas does not dispute the fundamental interdependence of the parts. That is to say, that the discussion of the independence of ethics from physics does not preclude the fundamental assumption about tripartition, namely that the division serves all the better to explain the unity of knowledge, which determines the goal of life. Thus Annas accepts that accumulated and added knowledge from physics puts the acquired knowledge about ethics not only into a wider perspective, but also into its proper context, which only then affords a complete understanding of nature, and consequently the acquisition of virtue. This, in turn, is what is required by the supreme Stoic *diktat* according to which only virtue is good, and virtue is life according to nature.³³

What comes to the fore is that questions about a gradual learning process are not what the Stoics, or at least the early Stoics, are concerned with. What they are concerned with is *paradosis*, transmission of doctrine, and not *didaskalia*, teaching. The difference is one between a fixed, fully worked-out (or which has the potential to be so) body of doctrine—whose very configuration is the actual doctrine, and which has thus to be passed down as it is, with its complex and inter-related constitutive elements—and a piecemeal,

surrounding fence stands for logic, the growth of the plants (or the soil or the trees) stands for physics, the fruits stand for ethics.

³¹ S.E. M. 7.23; Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1035A–D; Philo *Mut. Nom.* 75; Epict. *Diss.* 1.17.6–7.

³² A possibility adumbrated in BRUNSCHWIG 1995d p.249, though ultimately discarded. In stark opposition: COOPER 1995; BETEGH 2003; VOGT 2008 p.95f.

³³ ANNAS 1993 p.165 makes an emphatic distinction between the ‘debate’ concerning ethics and the wider philosophical picture gained by incorporating the topics found under physics into one’s philosophical studies. See ANNAS 1999 p.110ff. for an even clearer exposition of the higher relevance of the interrelatedness of the parts without hierarchy which means that the inter-relatedness does not impinge on the distinctiveness of the parts (i.e. that ethical conclusions do not derive from physics and vice versa), though each part is only fully understood when we have grasped the other parts of what Annas calls ‘seeing in the context of’, e.g. ethics in the context of physics and similarly physics in that of ethics, and so on for each part.

accumulative, and ultimately open-ended set of elements which need to be learnt.³⁴ The principle of *didaskalia* here is that a student needs to know a determined body of knowledge before he is allowed to move on to a higher stage, which he will be unable to tackle without previously assimilating the former level. Thus Chrysippus remarks that ‘ordinary school-type lessons’ (*enkuklia mathēmata*) are indeed ‘useful’ (*euchrēstein*). He means thereby that they supply the student with the basic concepts necessary to progress, in apprehending the laws of nature and right reason (D.L. 7.128–9).³⁵

This is fundamentally what Plato and Aristotle set out. They articulate the necessity for a gradual and developmental programme of education through a detailed curriculum (e.g. Plato *Rep.* 3 and 6–7) and habituation framed by life experience (Arist. *EN* 1.3, 1095a2). It is debatable how dogmatic Plato’s curriculum is in the *Republic*—after all Plato shows greater flexibility in the *Laws*, though admittedly what is considered there is an education for everyone (or almost), and not only for the philosopher-ruler.³⁶ But what is clear is that every stage in a person’s education is subservient to the next and ensures the student’s capacity to be receptive to the higher level.³⁷ But Plato does not hold fixed doctrines as such.³⁸ The educational programme we find in the *Republic* is precisely not designed to encapsulate a fixed doctrine. However, it is not by chance that later Platonists, who interpret Plato as having held doctrines,³⁹

³⁴ The ‘clopen set’ as identified in mathematics (in topology) well describes the arrangement of the objects pertaining to *didaskalia*, teaching, as characterized here: there are closed sets of things to learn (e.g. musical harmony, trigonometry, knowledge of the Good etc.), but each set corresponds, and leads to, a set which is open (e.g. the variety of musical composition, research in theoretical physics, etc.). Hence *didaskalia* ranges over a clopen set, closed and open at the same time. (I thank the mathematician Veronique Fischer for first drawing my attention to these topological constructs.)

³⁵ Chrysippus might be answering his teacher, Zeno’s remark at the start of his, Zeno’s, *Republic* where he states that ‘ordinary education’ (*ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία*) is ‘useless’ (*ἄχρηστος*), reported at D.L. 7.32, by which we are to understand that it does not lead to virtue or the good life: this consideration from Zeno’s *Republic* is reported in the midst of a discussion about Zeno’s impossible standards for virtue, and his having set out the *telos* of life at an unattainable horizon line; see on this EVANS GRUBBS et al. 2013 p.432. Zeno’s original depreciation of ordinary education makes the distinction with the transmission of doctrine (repeatedly evoked within the school) all the more well rooted. Chrysippus’s view about the utility of ordinary education revises, not so much Zeno’s fundamental claim, as the crippling prohibition it seems to impose. On how ordinary teaching is carried out see 4.1. and 4.2 below.

³⁶ JAEGER 1939¹, 1986 p.255ff.

³⁷ BURNYEAT 1999 p.280f.

³⁸ On the open-endedness of the Platonic written contributions, as a constant rejoinder to a flat imposition of a doctrinal interpretation, see COOPER 1997 pp.xxi–xxv.

³⁹ As Cicero (*Acad.* 1.17) puts it: ‘certam quandam disciplinae formulam composuerunt et eam quidem plenam ac refertam, illum autem Socraticam dubitanter de omnibus rebus et nulla affirmatione adhibita consuetudinem disserendi reliquerunt’, ‘they [the first students of Plato] put together a fixed methodical doctrine—one which was so rich and full of details. And they abandoned that Socratic habit of arguing by doubting everything and never making any definitive affirmation.’

read into the Platonic corpus a division of topics into logic, ethics, and physics.⁴⁰ For example, in the brief history of the Platonic Academy given by Cicero, through the mouthpiece of Varro in *Academica* 1, the first generation of Plato's students—Xenocrates at the forefront (whose prominent role in this respect is confirmed by a mention in S.E. at *M.* 7.16)—establishes the Old Academy by arranging Platonic tenets around the three parts. They treat Plato as already having such an arrangement in mind, though it is never explicitly mentioned by him (*Cic. Acad.* 1.19).

In view of the indication in our texts, that the Stoics devote some attention, and disagree, to some extent, about what to start with, in one's studies, and what to end with, Hadot 1991 argues that they are pedagogical innovators. For not only do the Stoics divide the subject-matter into three, but they put the question of education in terms of which—of logic, ethics, or physics—should come first. This claim is, however, reductive, not only with respect to the Stoics' predecessors, but also with respect to the Stoic view itself. The most important move, according to Hadot, is for the Stoics to have considered an internal order of the material in terms of interrelatedness, in contrast to Plato and Aristotle who do not explicitly consider epistemic reciprocity.⁴¹ But it does not seem that the Stoics' prime concern is an educational programme. The emphasis on the interrelatedness of the parts leads the Stoics, to innovate—to keep to Hadot's formula—but the innovation, then, is to shift the interest from pedagogy to completeness of doctrine; that is, a mutually sustaining interdependent web of parts—parts, that is, which are compresent to one another, rather than constituting stepping stones, hierarchically disposed. The original Stoic contribution consists thus, not so much in what to teach and how, but first and foremost, in the re-calibration of what philosophy is, and the dynamics between its constitutive parts. All of the parts are thus equally contributory to philosophy, and no part is merely instrumental to reaching a higher form of knowledge. Hence, to impart knowledge, it is in the

⁴⁰ The relevant texts are gathered in DÖRRIE & BALTES 1996, group 101, with testimonies among others from *Cic. Acad.* 1.19: 'iam accepta a Platone philosophandi ratio triplex', 'it had already been accepted by Plato that there is a threefold schema by which to do philosophy', but see also Xenocrates in S.E. 7.16; D.L. 3.56 in the *Life of Plato*; Alcinous *Didask.* 3, Eudorus in *Stob. Ecl.* 2.7.2.64ff. and others. On this first generation of post-Plato doctrinalization of Plato, see ANNAS 1999 p.109f.; also COOPER 1997 intro., recounting summarily the subsequent swerves in reaction to this initial doctrinally dogmatic interpretation of the 'Old Academy', as Cicero calls it (*Acad.* 1.13), first to scepticism (with Arcesilaus) which is the 'New Academy' (in Cicero *ibid.*), and back to enshrined doctrine in the successive ages of Platonism in imperial times and transmitted through this tripartite format to the Middle Ages through Augustine (*Civ.* 8.4). For a modern re-enactment of the tendency to extract doctrine from Plato, which runs parallel to the first generation of Platonists, see ROWE 2007 esp. p.273ff.

⁴¹ HADOT 1991 p.210. This is in any case debatable, certainly in the case of Plato who, in *Republic* book 7, justified the passage from one stage of the educational programme to the next by its being specifically preparatory for the next step.

form of *paradosis*, a block transmission of a complete and complex doctrine, rather than *didaskalia*, teaching.

It is not that the Stoics do not talk about *didaskalia*, a piecemeal absorption of information. They do. It is the second of two methods of acquisition of conceptions: the first through our senses (e.g. seeing white leads to having the conception of white), the second through ‘instruction (*didaskalia*) and diligence’ (e.g. learning to calculate the distance from the earth to the sun, or that there are no such things as ghosts).⁴² The passage in which we learn about these two methods describes how we develop the crucial mental tools that enable us to recognize successfully what we have impressions of. There is here no mention of an order of instruction, let alone distinct classes of kinds of conceptions. The emphasis is on the method of acquisition: instruction and diligence (i.e. applying oneself to the task) are contrasted with the senses, as means of acquisition of information. We understand from that contrast that *didaskalia* indicates non-perceptual, or at least not directly perceptual, reception of impressions, as a necessary stage in the development of our reason.⁴³

1.1.6. Tripartition: of ‘Philosophy Itself’

There still remains a question about the reciprocity or mutual dependence of the parts. It is not a question of pedagogy. Neither is it a question resolved through a distinction between a philosophical discourse and philosophy *simpliciter*. Rather, it is a question concerning philosophy *simpliciter* and the rationale that underscores it. For the foundational interrelatedness of the parts guarantees the unity of philosophy itself. There are thus questions about the internal dynamics of that interrelation which are in effect questions about the ‘*logos* corresponding to philosophy’, but these do not necessarily imply a meta-philosophical discourse, i.e. a discourse cut off from actually determining the internal order of the parts.

At the same time, it is not difficult to see that the discussion of the internal rationale, calibrating the dynamics between the parts of philosophy, could evolve into a separate question—separate, that is, from philosophy *simpliciter*—

⁴² Cf. Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B–C: ‘πρῶτος δὲ [ὁ] τῆς ἀναγραφῆς τρόπος ὁ διὰ τῶν αἰσθήσεων [...] αἱ δ’ ἡδὲ δι’ ἡμετέρας διδασκαλίας καὶ ἐπιμελείας’, ‘The first method of inscription (of impressions on the soul) is through the senses [...] the other [conceptions arise] through instruction and diligence.’ On this passage see 4.1 below.

⁴³ *Didaskalia* represents a common notion of education, the ‘ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία’, the encyclical, i.e. ordinary general education, referred to earlier, which incorporates all basic disciplines (e.g. grammar and mathematics); see MARROU 1948. It is the acquisition of what we could call ‘general culture’ today, which is criticized by Seneca, e.g. at *Ep.* 88 (*esp.* 88.23), because nothing there teaches us what virtue is; on this see REYDAMS-SCHILS 2010 p.564. See also 4.1 below on *didaskalia* as a stage towards rationalization, and not towards acquisition of Stoic doctrine.

because of the discursive nature of the question. After all, this seems to be the context in which the classification into logic, physics, and ethics was discussed amongst the first students of Plato, of which Aristotle's *Topics* is one of our best testimonies. Thus, in the generation of Stoics immediately following Chrysippus, this was a point of debate: Zeno of Tarsus, a student of Chrysippus and scholarch of the school after Chrysippus' death, distinguishes between discourse (*logos*) and philosophy itself in order to clarify the Stoic position:

but others say that these parts are not parts of discourse (*logos*) but of philosophy itself, as Zeno of Tarsus says.⁴⁴

What seems to have been important to Zeno of Tarsus is that it is not *logos*-discourse or argumentation, or the kinds of argumentation, that divide into three (a division Aristotle echoes in *Top.* 1.14⁴⁵) but something that is distinct from that, referred to here as 'philosophy itself'. Aristotle's remark about premisses or problems (as the constituents of deductive reasoning, *Top.* 11.4, 101b11) dividing into ethical, physical, and logical, is picked up from the Platonists, perhaps in particular Xenocrates who, in our sources (S.E. 7.16), is the Platonist to whom such a division is ascribed, and whom Aristotle cites many times throughout the *Topics*, both critically and as a reference point.⁴⁶ Could Zeno be arguing against this basically Academic view of the division, namely arguing that the Academics are wrong to apply it to discourse or kinds of argument?⁴⁷ Zeno may have had some difficulties in understanding the value of dialectic, which perhaps is what his teacher, Chrysippus, tried to remedy with the work dedicated to him, *That the Ancients rightly admitted dialectic alongside demonstration*, in two books, mentioned above.⁴⁸ But it is

⁴⁴ D.L. 7.41: 'ἄλλοι δ' οὐ τοῦ λόγου ταῦτα μέρη φασίν, ἀλλ' αὐτῆς τῆς φιλοσοφίας, ὡς Ζήνων ὁ Ταρσεύς'.

⁴⁵ The suggestion in *Topics* 1.14, 105b19–25 (cf. n.6 above) is itself a double-up on a first classification offered at *Topics* 1.1, 104b1–2, where the subject-matter of argumentations is divided into practical and contemplative (reaching truth or knowledge). What counts most here for Aristotle, is that all and every possible kind of question that fits the method of deductive reasoning (as stated from the very start of the treatise, *Top.* 1.1, 100a2) should be considered; thus every kind of classification is included, see BRUNDSCHWIG 1967 p.xxvif.

⁴⁶ BRUNDSCHWIG 1967 p.xcivff. Following from the previous footnote, Aristotle does not give any particular endorsement to this tripartite division but incorporates it, alongside others for the sake of completeness. There is nothing outlandish in Aristotle's taking the division on board as valid (especially given that there is no deep doctrinal commitment to it in the *Topics*). He himself is, after all, considered as one amongst the 'old disciples of Plato', grouped in this way by Cicero, *Fin.* 4.3–5, along with Speusippus and Xenocrates who endorsed the 'division of philosophy into three parts'. These same figures, furthermore, are presumably 'the ancients' Chrysippus refers to when quoted about tripartition in Plutarch *Stoic. Rep.* 1035A (cf. n.7 above). On the polemical attitude in Aristotle towards Xenocrates, see DILLON 1995 intro. and DILLON 2003 pp.106–8.

⁴⁷ We know that Zeno of Tarsus was generally untrusting of dialectic reasoning, see Stob. *Ecl.* 2.2.12. See BRUNDSCHWIG 1995d pp.235–6.

⁴⁸ In the catalogue of Chrysippus' works at D.L. 7.201, on whose possible content see BRUNDSCHWIG 1995d.

unclear that the distinction between *logos* and philosophy itself captures Zeno's worry about the fundamentality of dialectic. He might in fact be intimating that there is no distinction between *logos* and philosophy, and that it is a mistake to consider *logos*-discourse as something separate from philosophy—with the further intimation that his fellow Stoics lose sight of that inseparability when they go into details concerning the order of the interrelated parts.

The question whether tripartition is of philosophy *simpliciter*, or of the discourse about philosophy, concerns therefore a much more subtle distinction than one between philosophy and a meta-philosophical discourse about philosophy. It concerns a question about the nature of philosophy: what is it that can be tripartitioned? And what kind of division is tripartitioning, since the parts are not conceived as separate? One thing is clear, namely that the expression '*ho kata philosophian logos*', rather than 'discourse about philosophy', requires a translation closer to 'the rationale in accordance with philosophy' or 'the account corresponding to philosophy'.⁴⁹

The question is a typically Stoic preoccupation insofar as 'philosophy' is understood as rooted in a certain notion of reality, i.e. of what there is. In its most explicit form, it is a question that the Stoics were the first to be concerned with. Zeno of Tarsus is thus not defending an original view, contrary to his predecessors or peers who might have spoken of a *logos* about philosophy rather than of philosophy *simpliciter*. Rather, he is merely stating or confirming (both against rival schools of thought but presumably also for the younger generation of Stoics) that the Stoic tripartitioning of philosophy concerns what there is, though discursive means are used to articulate this. But for the Stoics, those means are nothing other than the reflection and articulation of what reality consists in.

This book is, in fact, about the Stoic preoccupation with tying down discourse to the rationale that structures reality, understanding language as fulfilling the role of articulating what reality is like, precisely through reflecting or moulding itself to that structure. That this articulation can be considered in three different ways, as the three parts of philosophy, is what Chrysippus suggests in the quotation above from Plutarch, and what Zeno of Tarsus is re-emphasizing here. This much can be said by now: that making tripartition the benchmark of a Stoic philosophical system is belittling and distorting to the Stoic prerogatives. What is crucial for the cohesion of Stoic philosophy is its mapping of the structure of reality and the way that structure is held together.

It turns out that considering tripartition as the innovative Stoic method into which reality is, so to speak, squeezed, is just as interpretative (rather than

⁴⁹ The *κατά* of the expression '*ὁ κατά φιλοσοφίαν λόγος*' has thus a similar connotation to the *κατά* which appears in the Stoic formulae referring to the goal of life, as in the expressions: '*κατ' ἀρετὴν ζῆν*', 'living according to virtue' or '*κατ' ἐμπειρίαν τῶν φύσει συμβαινόντων ζῆν*', 'living according to our experience of what happens by nature'. It is a *κατά* not of detachment and distance, but of correspondence and association, identified in KÜHNER & GERTH vol.2 §607, 3b.

descriptive) as what the later Platonists attempt to do when they present Platonic doctrine as perfectly fitting a tripartite division, as though that is how Plato was thinking all along. For what is difficult, and has often been simplified in the literature, is to set out the simultaneous double level of analysis that the Stoics are engaged in. On the one hand the articulation of the internal order, which relies not on a division of the parts of philosophy but on the deep sense of their being blended (exemplified with the discussion of fate which draws on physics, ethics, and logic all at once, cf. Cic. *Fat.* 1); on the other hand, a complete, fully worked out account of reality as a unified ontological structure, which has little or no reliance on a division into parts. In this perspective, the parts, at best, are superimposable such that, as we shall suggest further down, they are not parts, but different ways of describing one and the same structure, and should be more accurately called: the logical structure, the physical structure, and the ethical structure of reality. *Lekta* play a crucial role in this double-level analysis. For the very notion of an entity which is both the content of discursive expression and a structural component, guaranteeing the unity and wholeness of the overall structure, encapsulates the complexity of ‘philosophy itself’, as Zeno of Tarsus puts it. The aim of this book is to prove precisely this, by elucidating the terms of the status and role of *lekta* in the Stoic account of reality.

1.1.7. Philosophy Itself: Practice and Theory in One

A last note must be added to complete the survey of the literature on the distinction between philosophy and the *logos* concerning philosophy. Attempts have been made to distinguish philosophy *simpliciter* from philosophical discourse, on the back of a distinction familiar from other contexts, namely between the corporeal disposition of the soul and an incorporeal proposition relative to that disposition. The soul, for the Stoics, is corporeal (cf. D.L. 7.156). It is the sort of thing which gets disposed in a certain way, for instance by possessing knowledge or truth, from which it follows that knowledge or truth are themselves corporeal: they are the soul thus disposed. Truth then, as the soul disposed in a certain way, is distinguished from propositions which are true but incorporeal, precisely because they lack the corporeal elements that characterize truth or knowledge, namely *pneuma* (breath), in a certain state.⁵⁰ By analogy, a certain line of interpretation considers that the wise man’s soul, which is characterized by its possession of truth and knowledge, would be thus disposed so as to possess philosophy. Philosophical discourse, by contrast, would then correspond to sets of incorporeal

⁵⁰ S.E. *PH* 2.80 and *M.* 7.38–9.

propositions, true of philosophy. Philosophy *simpliciter*, on this interpretation, would amount to a corporeal disposition of the soul. And the discourse, *logos*, or indeed the theorems about philosophy, would come down to incorporeal propositions related to the corporeal disposition (philosophy), in the same way that true propositions are related to the disposition of truth in the soul.⁵¹

It is a neat theory, which aspires to deal tidily with a seemingly abstract term, ‘philosophy’, in concrete, material (or corporeal) terms, in accordance with much of what the Stoics say about such abstract terms. The tendency in the Platonic corpus to idealize terms like ‘the good’, ‘truth’, ‘justice’ and the like, appears thus recalibrated by the Stoics, in terms of states of the (corporeal) soul, and right or wrong judgement.⁵² But there is no text, in our extant Stoic corpus, that makes explicit a confluence between truth, knowledge, and philosophy. The one or two references in which philosophy comes close to being compared to knowledge (*epistēmē*) or wisdom (*sophia* for the Greeks, or *sapientia* in the Roman authors) make it clear precisely that philosophy is not knowledge or wisdom, but a ‘tendency towards’, an ‘attention to’, a ‘pursuit of’ knowledge or wisdom, but not those things themselves. Philosophy is thus characterized in a passage from S.E. as an ‘*epitēdeusis*’, a cultivation, of wisdom;⁵³ in another passage from Seneca, philosophy is an ‘*amor*’, a love of wisdom, and an ‘*adfectatio*’, a pursuit of wisdom (which itself is the perfection of the human mind).⁵⁴ The use of ‘*epitēdeusis*’ as a description of philosophy seems to stem from a Chrysippean use in the *Logical Investigations* (PHerc. 1020). In this fragment-passage, two options seem to be considered concerning what philosophy is:

either a cultivation of reason or knowledge of the right.⁵⁵

⁵¹ See IERODIAKONOU 1993 p.60f. and BROUWER 2014 *esp.* pp.35–50, reading the three parts into the definition of wisdom.

⁵² Famously there are no such things as the Platonic Ideas for the Stoics, thus summarized in Stob. *Ecl.* 1.12.3.5–9: ‘of all animals and of as many other things of which they say there are Ideas (*δόξων λέγουσιν ιδέας εἶναι*), of these, the Stoic philosophers say that they do not even subsist (*ἀνυπάρχουσιν εἶναι*)’. Justice and all other virtues, as well as vices, are dispositions of the soul for the Stoics, the result of having rightly or wrongly assented to an impression: D.L. 7.89–91, Galen *PHP* 7.2.1–4. See JEDAN 2009 p.58ff. and 3.3 below. On affections of the soul, or emotions, being errors of judgement, see Cic. *Fin.* 3.35.

⁵³ S.E. *M.* 9.13: ‘the dogmatists’ at large are said to hold that ‘philosophy is the cultivation of wisdom’ (*ἐπιτηδεύσεις σοφίας*).

⁵⁴ Sen. *Ep.* 89.4. See also Clement *Paed.* 1.13.101.2, in a context discussing the Stoic notion of the *katorthōma* (Stoic right action), in which philosophy is said to be the *epitēdeusis* of right reason or knowledge, which in fact appears to be an almost word-for-word reference to a statement from Chrysippus *Logical Investigations* in SVF ii.41.28 = PHerc. 1020; see next note.

⁵⁵ Chrysippus *Log. Inv.* in SVF ii.41.28 = PHerc. 1020: ‘(ἡ) φιλοσοφία, εἴτε ἐ(πι)τηδεύ(ου)ς λόγου ὁρ(θό)τητ(ος) (εἴτ’) ἐπιστήμη(η)’.

The immediate context of this alternative is a discussion of Aristotle's account of the wise man said to be 'infallible, unerring and doing all things perfectly'. Chrysippus is considering in what way the Stoic account of the wise man, which sounds eerily similar, is in fact different from Aristotle's. First of all, Chrysippus says, we must consider what philosophy consists in on the two accounts. The two options are thus set out. It is apparent that the first branch of the alternative (the cultivation of reason) is the Stoic view, and the second (knowledge of the right), the Aristotelian, for Chrysippus then goes on to speak of 'us' (with '*chrēsometha*') as the philosophers who think that the wise man is the man who makes use, and indeed 'expertly' so, of *logos*-reason.⁵⁶ The wise man, the *sophos*, is the man who, possessing reason, is constantly practising philosophy, for instance by constantly making use of dialectic. The following line spells out how *logos* is understood here:

by *logos* I mean that to which all things logical belong by nature.⁵⁷

Chrysippus is thus expanding on the first alternative, and explaining what it means to consider philosophy as 'the cultivation of *logos*', and not the knowledge of what is right. This rather puts a cap on any further speculations about a convergence, for the Stoics, of philosophy and knowledge. For Chrysippus thinks that the absence of such a convergence is the basis on which the Stoics distinguish themselves from the Aristotelians. Without putting particular doctrinal weight on these lines from the *Logical Investigations*, they are sufficiently distinctive in the choice of terms to cast doubt on an interpretation according to which philosophy for the Stoics should be conflated with knowledge. Though it is not clear what Chrysippus is positively saying here about philosophy being a cultivation of reason, what comes to the fore is the negative purport, namely that it is not knowledge, since cultivation, *epitēdeusis*, is contrasted with knowledge.⁵⁸

The unity of philosophy is preserved, not because it makes up one body of knowledge, but because all forms of its practice (e.g. constantly doing logic)

⁵⁶ Chrysippus *Log. Inv.* =, = PHerc. 1020 (cont.): 'χρ(η)|(σ)όμ(ε)θα ἐμπ(ε)ύ(ρωσ αὐ)|τῶ [i.e. λόγῳ]', 'we will make use of it [i.e. *logos*] in an expert way'. This is a pillar of Stoic doctrine, given that the wise man is an 'expert' in dialectic, see D.L. 7.48: 'ἐμπείρου διαλεκτικῆς ἀνδρὸς εἶναι'.

⁵⁷ Chrysippus *Log. Inv.* =, = PHerc. 1020: 'λόγον δὲ λέγω τὸν κατὰ φύσιν πᾶσι τοῖς λογικοῖς ὑπάρχοντα'. See more on this passage in 2.1.1 below.

⁵⁸ IERODIAKONOU 1993 p.60 takes the expressions 'cultivation of', or 'pursuit of', not to distance philosophy from wisdom, but rather to suggest they are interchangeable and that we should therefore take philosophy, φιλοσοφία, to be on an ontological par with truth, ἀληθεία, namely as a corporeal state of the soul. But in the light of the passage from Chrysippus' *Log. Inv.*, along with, for instance, Seneca's *Ep.* 89.4–5 in which philosophy is 'that which tends to' that which 'wisdom has attained' ('haec [philosophia] eo tendit quo illa [sapientia] pervenit'), it seems much more likely to take the term 'pursuit of' as truly distancing philosophy from wisdom, to the extent that they must belong to two different categories. If wisdom is the soul disposed in a certain way (as all virtues are), then philosophy cannot be similar to it.

follow the requirement to pay attention to its underlying *logos*-reason, or rationale. The paean to the wise man, with which Cicero has Cato end his defence of Stoic ethics in *De Finibus* book 3, ends with a rhetorical question about the utterly perfect state of the wise man:

if indeed no one other than the good man and all the good are happy, what is more necessary to cultivate than philosophy and what is more divine than virtue?⁵⁹

Cato acknowledges the state of the wise, good man, and reminds us how the wise man got there: through the cultivation of philosophy: that is, the everyday practising, the perennial tilling, caring, and labouring that is contained in the Latin '*colendum est*'. The whole of book 3 of *De Finibus* explores the behavioural and epistemic stages involved in this particular kind of *colere*. It follows that each part of philosophy is to be conceived in terms of this cultivation of *logos*-reason, whether one is engaged in an inquiry into the passions (a part of ethics, D.L. 7.84), or into the life of plants (a sub-part of aetiology, itself a part of physics, D.L. 133), or indeed whether one is engaged in dialectic (a part of logic, D.L. 7.41–2).

Chrysippus says that, if we do not live, we cannot 'philosophize' and thereby become wise.⁶⁰ It takes time, adds Chrysippus, to make all the errors that need to be made and overcome. That is what to 'philosophize' consists in, namely tackling and coming to terms with what we do wrongly and out of ignorance, by learning to pay attention to the underlying reason. It turns out the Stoics recalibrate the notion of philosophy, away from abstraction, but not as a state of mind, nor *a fortiori* as a state of wisdom. Rather, philosophy is assimilated to what a person does if and when they cultivate *logos*-reason, which is the sort of cultivation or practice which takes time. It is thus not by chance that Chrysippus speaks of 'the *theōrēmata* of the philosopher' (in the quotation given in n.7 above from Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1035A), the speculations or objects of study of the philosopher, and not of philosophy. For what the Stoics are interested in pinpointing is the engagement in the activity that is the cultivation of, or paying attention to, reason. This is not to say that 'philosophy is a way of life'. This view, popularized by Hadot,⁶¹ is fundamentally based on a separation between theory and practice, *logos* and *askēsis*, whereby what is designated as 'philosophy' is then the happy marriage of the two. The view

⁵⁹ Cic. *Fin.* 3.76: 'quod si ita est, ut neque quisquam nisi bonus vir et omnes boni beati sint, quid philosophia magis colendum aut quid est virtute divinius?'

⁶⁰ Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1039D–E: 'οὐ γὰρ ἔστι μὴ ζῶντα φιλοσοφεῖν οὐδὲ μὴν πολὺν χρόνον ἐπιζήσαντα κακῶς καὶ ἀπείρως φρόνιμον γενέσθαι', '...for it is not possible to philosophize if we are not living nor can we become wise if we do not spend a great deal of our lives living badly and in ignorance'.

⁶¹ HADOT 1981, 1995, and see in his defense I. HADOT 2016, appealing to the influence of German idealism on this reading of ancient stoicism; and see SELLARS 2003 p.76ff.; REYDAMS-SCHILS 2010.

developed in these pages is not only that theory and practice are inseparable, but also that this is in fact not what the Stoics, in particular the early Stoics, are talking about. In ‘philosophizing’ the Stoics are interested in articulating a discourse which maps out all the elements that constitute living one’s life. When the Stoics speak about philosophy *simpliciter*, this is much closer to a *logos*, understood as a rationalizing discourse, than the scholarship, which has focused on separating philosophy from a discourse about it, would allow.

Apart from the few passages mentioned above, there are hardly any texts about the nature or status of philosophy in the early Stoic corpus. I would argue that this is no mere coincidence or the result of a loss of source texts. It rather reflects a lack of interest in this question within the Hellenistic schools. For it is Plato and Aristotle who make the questions ‘what is philosophy?’ and ‘what makes a philosopher?’ key questions. Theirs is a revolutionary interest and inquiry into the activity of philosophy or ‘philosophizing’, which formalizes a set of preoccupations having an account of the good life as their focal point; the task of the philosopher is to focus on it.⁶² Aristotle’s *Invitation to Philosophy*, the *Protrepticus* (now in a fragmentary state⁶³), is a landmark in Aristotle’s involvement in figuring out what a philosopher should be engaged in. His own contribution, providing one of the broadest possible scientific grasps on the world and its inhabitants, shows what that engagement consists in and what the task of the philosopher and the scope of philosophy as a scientific discipline are.⁶⁴ But in the immediate aftermath of the Platonic and Aristotelian establishment of philosophy as a kind of doing or practice,⁶⁵ the question loses its urgency. The nature itself of philosophy is not at stake in the Hellenistic schools. The question now is not what philosophy is or whether there is a distinction between a discourse about philosophy and philosophy,

⁶² E.g. Plato *Symp.* 173a2–3: ‘οἷόμενος δεῖν πάντα μᾶλλον πράττειν ἢ φιλοσοφεῖν’, ‘I used to think I had to do anything rather than doing philosophy’: philosophizing here is a specific kind of doing (*prattein*). This is how the philosopher-kings are characterized in the *Republic*, e.g. *Rep.* 473d1–3 where the rulers of the city are enjoined to be philosophers and ‘to philosophize’: ‘ἢ οἱ φιλόσοφοι βασιλεύσωσιν [...] ἢ οἱ βασιλῆς [...] λεγόμενοι [...] φιλοσοφήσωσι’, ‘either philosophers rule, or those who are said to be rulers philosophize’. Socrates then develops this further by saying that political exercise and philosophy must coincide (‘δύναμις τε πολιτική καὶ φιλοσοφία’).

⁶³ See the work on the *Protrepticus* by Hutchinson and Johnson at [http://www.protrepticus.info/](http://www.protrepticus.info/http://www.protrepticus.info/).

⁶⁴ Aristotle famously begins the *Metaphysics* reflecting on human beings’ natural tendency to wonder, which leads them to ‘philosophize’, *Arist. Met.* 1.2, 982b12ff. (‘διὰ γὰρ τὸ θαυμάζειν οἱ ἄνθρωποι καὶ νῦν καὶ τὸ πρῶτον ἤρξαντο φιλοσοφεῖν’); in the following lines, this activity of philosophizing is explained as a disinterested pursuit of knowledge.

⁶⁵ An off-hand remark by Aristotle at the beginning of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (*EN* 2.4, 1105b11–15) reconfirms this: ‘it is in doing (*prattein*) virtuous actions that we will become virtuous, but ‘most people do not do this, but rather fall back onto discourse (ἐπὶ δὲ τὸν λόγον καταφεύγοντες), thinking that they are thereby philosophizing (οἰονται φιλοσοφεῖν)’. The implication is that this is a wrong conception of philosophy, which will not lead to becoming virtuous in any way.

but rather how to articulate the relation between life and philosophy such that philosophy will correspond precisely to life, that is, to life in, and life of, the cosmos. Thus, as we have already suggested, far from there being a divergence between philosophy *simpliciter* and a *logos* concerning or corresponding to philosophy, the concern of Stoicism is that there should precisely not be any difference. For philosophy is itself a practice or cultivation of reason, and the *logos* concerned with philosophy is a discursive articulation of that reason. Philosophy comes in the currency of discourse, and so the task of philosophy is to articulate a discourse in conformity with life in the cosmos.

1.1.8. Tripartition into Parts, Topics, or Species?

Let us conclude this negative survey of the methodological interpretation of tripartition by turning to the divergences in our sources with regard to the term used to designate the actual parts: they are not always ‘parts’ (*merē*), but sometimes designated as ‘species’ (*eidē*) according to some (Chrysippus and Eudromus are mentioned), *topoi* or ‘topics’ for others (Apollodorus), ‘genera’ for others (e.g. Chrysippus, according to Plutarch).⁶⁶ Interpretation of these divergences has focused on methodology: the different designations set out different ways the relation between the parts and the whole is considered. The species/genus terminology highlights the affiliation of each of the parts to the main header; the variation on the use of ‘species’ or ‘genus’ is secondary and derivative on whether one is considering the three parts as genera with subsequent species of inquiry (sub-parts in ethics, physics, and logic), or whether one considers the three parts (ethics, logic, and physics) as the species of the genus-header, philosophy. The designation of the parts as ‘topics’ would rather indicate that the parts are characterized by independent and separate elements of analysis.⁶⁷

Again, as we have already seen from different perspectives, this methodological approach clashes with some grounding ontological commitments of Stoicism. First and foremost, it disregards a rather crucial aspect of Stoic thought about species and genera, namely that they are nothing more than mind-produced and mind-dependent concepts.⁶⁸ This raises the question of the status of the parts to a rather different level of consideration: one at which the very notion that there are parts of philosophy is put down to a way of thinking about philosophy as a concept in the mind, but which in itself has no extension in reality, neither as part of a discourse nor as a disposition of the

⁶⁶ D.L. 7.39–40 for the different designations. As for Chrysippus in Plutarch, this is mentioned in our quotation in n.7 above from *Stoic. Rep.* 1035A.

⁶⁷ For what I have called the methodological interpretation see IERODIAKONOU 1993 pp.62–8.

⁶⁸ D.L. 7.61. See SEDLEY 1985; BRUNSCHWIG 1988.

soul. The implications of the view tie back—consistently—to what we have seen above to be a simplifying attempt to corporealize philosophy (away from abstraction) in the way truth and knowledge are corporealized as dispositions of the soul. But just as the question there has no textual backing, the designation of the parts of philosophy as species or genera is, as it stands, somewhat vexed, given the lack of any texts attesting to these appellations apart from the perfunctory report in D.L. mentioned above.⁶⁹

What the methodological approach attempts to draw out is the concern, amongst the Stoics, to capture a particular web of relations between the parts. The distinction made there between a genealogical relation (on the basis of the ‘genus’/‘species’ designation) and the locative-distributive ‘*topos*’, is another way to bring to the fore the basic question about the Stoic tripartition, namely on what terms the parts are interrelated. Distinct but not separable, or distinct and separable? The latter option, distinct and separable, is the view endorsed by interpreters of tripartition as dividing parts of a separate discourse intended for the presentation and teaching of philosophy. On this view, ethics, physics, and logic should constitute theoretically independent building blocks, though acknowledging a fundamental ontological interrelatedness (Annas 1993). But in the wake of subsequent replies to this line of interpretation,⁷⁰ further arguments have been brought forward here to minimize the importance of presentation and teaching. The emphasis rather is on the ontological commitments and transmission of fixed doctrine.

In this light, tripartition divides something unitary in itself, which actually has no separate or separable parts. So ‘parts’ and ‘partitioning’ must have a very weak sense, since the division is not of separable parts. It is therefore not surprising that there is some vacillation in the terminology for the parts, since ethics, logic, and physics are not separate chunks of doctrine. They are not actually anything separable. The most that can be said about the attempt at calling the parts ‘species’ or ‘genera’ is that we know that the Stoics think of these terms as convenient ways of speaking of our mental capacity to discern levels of generality.⁷¹ We can thus distinguish between a general kind of reasoning over the cosmos from a perspective of ethics (e.g. what makes an action good), and a different kind of reasoning, involving the physical state of a person’s soul for instance. The paucity of extant texts cuts off any further speculation. But we should add that in all other passages referring to the parts of philosophy, it is the terms ‘*meros*’ (part) or ‘*topos*’ (topic) which are used,

⁶⁹ In IERODIAKONOU 1993 p.64f. the main weight of argumentation lies, not on the use of these terms but rather on methods of division (a distinction between *dihairēsis* and *merismos*) with texts from Cicero’s *Top.*, Alexander of Aphrodisias’ *in Top.* and Martianus Capella, none of these making explicit or implicit reference to the Stoics.

⁷⁰ BETEGH 2003; VOGT 2008; GILL 2006 p.162.

⁷¹ D.L. 7.61; Stob. *Ecl.* 1.12.3.2–4: species and genera, as the most and least generic concepts (ἐννοήματα), are neither real things nor qualified in any way, but only ‘figments of the mind’ which are ‘quasi-things’, i.e. mind-born and mind-dependent, see BRONOWSKI 2013 p.286ff.

both in D.L. as in S.E. *M.* 7.1–26. These terms, in contrast to the Stoic use of ‘genus’ and ‘species’, indicate division, but at the same time imply a correlation. The parts in question are constitutive parts.

When the Aristotelians discuss, against the Stoics, their own view about logic as emphatically not a part of philosophy, they make a distinction between a constitutive part, ‘*meros*’ (i.e. the way the Stoics consider logic as a part of philosophy), and a means or instrument, ‘*organon*’, which logic is for the Peripatetics.⁷² This confirms where the emphasis lies for the Stoics: when it comes to talking about parts of philosophy, they are not thinking about sets of principles corresponding to this or that field of study—the kind of principles which can be instrumentalized, insofar as they can be applied to other domains of inquiry as instruments. Rather the opposite is the case. The interrelatedness of the parts is constitutive of a unified whole. There is, for the Stoics, a philosophical analysis. It is thought out in terms of an investigation into the rationale of this structure which can be thus approached from three main perspectives.

1.2. HISTORIOGRAPHY AND ITS ENTANGLEMENTS

The tripartitioning of philosophy as a programmatic and schematic approach to philosophy is probably the one contribution to philosophical debate the Stoics are readily credited with by their contemporaries from across the doctrinal board. No other of their theories gains such approval. This is remarkable, but also rather suspicious. For the Stoics are consistently criticized for being abstruse and over-complicated.⁷³ How could they suddenly so universally reach consensus? Unless, of course, they did not.

We have already suggested that the emphasis on tripartition as a grounding piece of methodology is misguided. At best, a considerably dumbed down and trivialized notion of tripartition seems to have permeated the ranks. For it appears as accepted and practically unchallenged that philosophy is constituted of three main parts (logic, physics, and ethics) from the Stoics on.

⁷² Alex. in *An. Pr.* 1.8–9; Ps-Amm. in *Anal.* 8.20–1 with explicit mention of the Stoics: ‘οἱ μὲν Στωϊκοὶ τὴν λογικὴν οὐ μόνον ὄργανον οὐκ ἀξιοῦσι καλεῖσθαι φιλοσοφίας, ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ μόνον τὸ τυχόν ἀλλὰ μέρος’, ‘the Stoics consider that logic should be called neither an instrument of philosophy, nor even a piece, but a part’. See further LOYD 1998 pp.19–20.

⁷³ Just a few examples: the critique from absurdity (‘ἀτόπον εἶναι’) of their ontology and physics: Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1073D–E; Ps-Galen *Qual. Inc.* 476, 4–14; of the theory of passions: Galen *PHP* 4.2.8ff. As BARNES 2015a pp.182–9: ‘... if the Stoics were original thinkers, they often bought originality at the price of paradox’.

1.2.1. Sextus Empiricus: a Historian of Philosophy with an Agenda

In a mini-historiographical survey, S.E. (at *M.* 7.4–23) runs through almost all the philosophers of antiquity (to his day), assessing to what extent, partially or completely, they adopt a tripartitioning of philosophy. Each philosopher is discussed with the expectations of tripartition already in mind. Thus a series of Presocratic philosophers from Thales to Empedocles and Parmenides (S.E. *M.* 7.5) are said to have thought philosophy had only one part, namely physics. It is of course anachronistic of S.E. to assume that any of these philosophers thought in those terms.⁷⁴ But it is more than merely anachronistic, it is a programmatic move towards a uniformity of philosophy, or what it is philosophers do. It is done on the back of the tripartite division of philosophy, which, for it to embrace Thales as well as Eubolides and the other Megarian logicians (S.E. *M.* 7.13), and the Cyrenaics (S.E. *M.* 7.15), Plato (S.E. *M.* 7.9), Epicurus (S.E. *M.* 7.22), and the Stoics, as well as Aristo the dissenting Stoic, must necessarily be such a trivialized notion of a tripartite division that nothing specifically Stoic about it could possibly remain. Moreover most of the philosophers and schools mentioned (such as the Presocratics) are said to think that actually philosophy consists of only one or two of the parts. This further characterizes the kind of tripartition in question, which does not require interdependence of the parts: they are considered as detachable and removable, given that philosophy can do without them, according to the different philosophers presented. There is a turning-point in the Hellenistic period at which the Stoics are shown to play a decisive role, and after which the three parts are endorsed as a fixture for any school of thought.⁷⁵

much more complete [...] is what those who say that, some of philosophy is concerned with Physics, some with Ethics and some with Logic. Of these, Plato is virtually the pioneer as he discussed many questions of Physics and Ethics and not a few of Logic. But those who most expressly are committed to this division are Xenocrates, the Peripatetics and the Stoics.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Arist. *Phys.* 1.1, 184b16–17ff. had already suggested a different classification of the Presocratics, distinguishing (from amongst the very same people mentioned by S.E.) between the ‘physicists’ and those committed to there being one principle only (Parmenides and Melissus).

⁷⁵ S.E.’s whole works, a detailed critique of the dogmatists, are structured according to this tripartition: *Against the Logicians* (*M.* 7–8), *Against the Physicists* (*M.* 9–10), *Against the Ethicists* (*M.* 11). See Seneca’s off-hand remark (Sen. *Ep.* 89.9) that the tripartition of philosophy is so obvious that ‘all of the greatest authors and most people endorse it’ (‘et maximi et plurimi auctores’). The single and marginal dissenting voices such as the Stoic Aristo of Chios who considered that only ethics was a philosophical topic (S.E. *M.* 7.12; cf. SCHOFIELD 1984) confirms the implementation of tripartition in philosophy in post-Hellenistic times.

⁷⁶ S.E. *M.* 7.16–17: ‘ἐντελέστερον δὲ [...] οἱ εἰπόντες τῆς φιλοσοφίας τὸ μὲν τι εἶναι φυσικὸν τὸ δὲ ἠθικὸν τὸ δὲ λογικόν· ὧν δυνάμει μὲν Πλάτων ἐστὶν ἀρχηγός, περὶ πολλῶν μὲν φυσικῶν, [περὶ] πολλῶν δὲ ἠθικῶν, οὐκ ὀλίγων δὲ λογικῶν διαλεχθεῖς· ῥητότατα δὲ οἱ περὶ τὸν Ξενοκράτη καὶ οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ Περιπάτου, ἔτι δὲ οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς ἔχονται τῇσδε τῆς διαιρέσεως.’

There is something odd, to say the least, in the last sentence, in which the Stoics, along with Xenocrates and the Peripatetics, are said to be ‘most expressive’ or ‘most communicative’ (‘*ῥητότατα*’) about adopting the division. For the Peripatetics at least, are expressly clear precisely about this: that they reject logic as a part of philosophy (as noted above, n.72). What is more, Plato’s ‘pioneering’ role here, is somewhat disconcerting. We have already highlighted the role played by the first generation of Plato’s students, who engage in a retrospective tidying-up of the Platonic topics of discussion, implementing a tripartite division, for the sake of establishing a stabilized form of Platonic doctrine (see 1.1.5 nn.39 and 40 above). Here in S.E., not by chance, the name of Xenocrates is mentioned as having discussed tripartition in particular.⁷⁷ But S.E. is doing something different from Xenocrates and his fellow Platonists, who were being doctrinally assertive. This is the difference between interpretation and historiography. As a writer of the history of philosophy, in these pages, S.E. writes into his history the establishment of the parts of philosophy as an expository and methodologically revealing tool, not of philosophical doctrine in itself, but as what it is to do philosophy for the ‘dogmatists’ as he calls them.⁷⁸

What is more, the application of tripartition unilaterally has an evaluative role, as S.E. claims that ‘the most complete’ doctrine is the one in which all three parts are present. S.E. therefore does not refer to Xenocrates in virtue of the Xenocratean (re)configuration of Platonic doctrine, but only because Xenocrates emphasized tripartition in his writing. S.E. further reads tripartition into Plato and Socrates (as also into all the other schools of dogmatic thought) on his own terms. It is thus not on the basis of anything Xenocrates might have said that S.E. refers first to Plato as having defended Socrates against the charge that Socrates was only concerned with ethical questions and disregarded all other matters (S.E. *M.* 7.9–10). Plato is taken by S.E. to have shown that Socrates had indeed been concerned with all aspects of philosophy

⁷⁷ Cic. *Acad.* 1.17 singles out Xenocrates (who was the second scholarch of the Academy) as much more influential in shaping the fixed doctrine of the Old Academy than Speusippus, Plato’s first successor at the head of the Academy.

⁷⁸ S.E. states at the beginning of the *Outlines of Scepticism* (*PH* 1.4): ‘*ἐκεῖνο προειπόντες, ὅτι περὶ οὐδενὸς τῶν λεχθησομένων διαβεβαιούμεθα ὡς οὕτως ἔχοντος πάντως καθάπερ λέγομεν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ νῦν φαινόμενον ἡμῖν ἱστορικῶς ἀπαγγέλλομεν περὶ ἐκάστου*’, ‘let us say this first: that of none of the things which will be said do we guarantee that they are certainly the way we say they are; rather we report, from a historical perspective, on each single matter as it appears to us at the time’. There are at least two crucial points to underline, which converge in the formula ‘*ἱστορικῶς*’, ‘from a historical perspective’: (i) there is no pretence to neutrality or objectivity, and (ii) S.E. gives himself full licence not to be so, on the basis of what is implied by this formula. It is a one-off usage in S.E., presumably drawing on a number of connotations of ‘*ἱστορία*’ (from inquiry to narrative, to gathering of information, all present already in Herodotus, cf. DARBO-PESCHANSKI 2013), but S.E. constructs his own understanding here, and suggests that he reads the ancient philosophers with hindsight, from his own subjective point of view; see CASSIN 1990 and CORTI 2011 esp. p.223.

familiar from tripartition (in logic, ethics, and physics). When the inquiry then turns to Plato himself, who does not officially, neither explicitly nor as a point of method, categorize his philosophical discussions in terms of tripartition, it is S.E., as we see in the quotation above, who rehearses a similar revisionist move in defence of Plato as he, S.E., claims Plato had done for Socrates. The aim is to show that Plato had a ‘complete doctrine’ despite appearances. The concern about incompleteness is thus a concern about form and schematization, and not about the doctrine itself, which had been, in contrast, the concern of Xenocrates. Like Socrates, Plato is said to have discussed all the relevant questions but his awareness or concern for the tripartitive methodology is only ‘potential’ or ‘virtual’ (*δυνάμει*). If Plato is said to have only a virtual division of the parts of philosophy, it is hard to believe, as S.E. claims, that Plato had tried to show that Socrates had such a division.

In any event, S.E.’s approach to Plato (and Socrates) is very different from what Xenocrates does when dividing Plato’s philosophy into three parts. With Xenocrates, the stakes are programmatic and interpretative within a debate about Platonism itself: does Plato have a positive ethics? Or is he consistently aporetic? Similarly with cosmology and dialectic (is the latter just a method or *the* method?). By assigning a conscious tripartitioning of philosophy to Plato, Xenocrates ascribes to Plato a positive doctrine: there is something like Plato’s ethics, which tells us such and such about the good and the soul, and similarly with physics and logic.⁷⁹ But S.E. has a completely different agenda. He applies similar adjustments with hindsight onto other schools of thought (e.g. the Presocratics), all for the sake of uncovering the dogmatic underpinnings of every school of thought which is not sceptic. This is the case even for schools of thought which, on the surface, most recuse dogmatism. S.E. thus reads tripartition into philosophers who either self-proclaim themselves to be concerned only with one aspect of philosophy, or claim that there is only one topic with which philosophy is concerned, in an explicit stance against the normative tripartitioning adopted by the established, ‘dogmatic’ schools. The Cyrenaics for instance are shown actually to have a doctrine of tripartition hidden under what they consider as only ethics—and, indeed, are called out on it. S.E. reveals that ethics here is a mere umbrella term covering also physics and logic (S.E. *M.* 7.11). For S.E., tripartition is the benchmark of dogmatism.

This is important both for Stoicism itself and for the reception of Stoicism in antiquity and in modern historiography. For when S.E. says that Xenocrates, the Peripatetics, and the Stoics are ‘most expressly committed to the

⁷⁹ On this see ANNAS 1999 p.109f. The corpus of fragments ascribable to Xenocrates is sparse, see HEINZE 1892 and ISNARDI-PARENTE 1982, with DORANDI & ISNARDI-PARENTE 2012 intro. esp. pp.33–40. From a list of his works, however, listed in D.L. 4.11–14, it is possible to reconstruct a vast array of questions addressed, which span the three parts, logic, ethics, and physics, see DILLON 2003 pp.98–155.

division', two points are thereby implied. Firstly, that they are the philosophers who more than merely 'discussed' ('διαλεχθείς') the three parts of philosophy (such as Socrates or Plato), but properly built their doctrines on the basis of the division.⁸⁰ Secondly, that, according to S.E., they all say the same thing, namely that philosophy has three parts. The first and second point are not separate. For the only way to clear S.E. from the charge of utter disregard of the evidence, especially in the case of the Peripatetics, is to see that his standards for being a part are extremely minimal. It is enough, on his view, to have acknowledged that there is something like logic distinct from ethics and physics, for logic, physics, and ethics to be parts of philosophy. In other words, it is enough to be 'very communicative' ('ῥητότατα'), that is to say to have talked and written about it, for this to count as a commitment to tripartition. The Peripatetics end up also committed to a tripartition of philosophy because they distinguish logic from ethics and physics. In other words, S.E. ignores the real debate on this question between the Peripatetics and the Stoics, as to what counts as a part and what is the status of a part. He proceeds with a clear agenda, dumbing down certain asperities for the sake of a basic unified account of dogmatic philosophy.

1.2.2. The Real Debate about Tripartition between the Stoics and the Peripatetics: What is a Whole?

In recognizing the Sextan agenda, which seeks to standardize a dogmatist line about tripartition, grouping together Stoics, Peripatetics, and Platonists such as Xenocrates, we can distance ourselves from S.E., and still make at least two points which are ideology-free and contextually relevant. Firstly, it is after Plato that the question of tripartition comes to the fore in general discussions concerning philosophy. Xenocrates here represents the Platonic contribution,⁸¹ but Aristotle—whom Cicero (*Acad.* 1.17) places alongside Xenocrates in considering tripartition as part of a shared Platonic inheritance,⁸² and whom we

⁸⁰ The contrast here (S.E. *M.* 7.16) between 'διαλεχθείς' (having discussed) and 'ἔχονται τῇσδε τῆς διαιρέσεως' (being committed to the division) is clearly emphatic.

⁸¹ But see Atticus, Alcinous et al. referred to in n.40 above.

⁸² See the emphatic association of the Old Academy with Aristotle in the sweeping history of the Academy that Cicero puts in the mouth of Varro (Cic. *Acad.* 1.17–18), first and foremost with regard to the tripartite frame the Platonists and Aristotle are shown to self-constructively inherit from 'the abundance' of Platonic doctrine: 'utrique Platonis ubertate completi', 'both having been filled up with Plato's abundance' (Cic. *Acad.* 1.17), and subsequently are both said to have 'inherited from Plato a tripartite division of how to go about philosophizing (*ratio philosophandi*)' at *Acad.* 1.19; from *Acad.* 1.19 to 1.33 the details of tripartite doctrine are discussed always with a plural-dual subject covering the Platonists and Aristotle, ending with a recapitulating 'Haec forma erat illis prima, a Platone tradita' (*Acad.* 1.33), 'such was the original schema both inherited from Plato'.

know, for instance from Aristotle's *Topics* (*Top.* 1.14) to have considered philosophy as comprising these headings—is also a representative contributor to this discussion. It will take the subsequent debate with the Stoics for the Peripatetics to formalize a specifically non-tripartite view. A net rejection of tripartition is not explicit in Aristotle. Secondly, from the Stoics onwards a general consensus is reached, on the basis of a minimal acknowledgement of distinction between the parts, that philosophy has parts, and that any philosophical account from then on needs to provide a logic, an ethics, and a physics or otherwise explain why it does not. There is thus a turning-point which S. E. helps us to pinpoint, which is characterized by a shift in concern about philosophy, moving gradually away from the question of what philosophy is, to the question of how to go about doing philosophy, or philosophizing.

The Stoics are at the centre of this shift. But the Stoics neither invent, nor are they the main philosophers to impose tripartition to general consensus. Nor—as I argue in this chapter—do the Stoics consider tripartition of any real or fundamental importance. For the question the Stoics are concerned with, in relation to tripartition, is not implementing tripartition, but questioning its implementation. They defend the view that tripartition is not the important step to make in philosophizing, or doing philosophy, but that it is the relation between the parts which is the more crucial question. They are indeed 'particularly communicative' about tripartition, but not to impose it on everyone as the methodological, normative frame into which all philosophical accounts can be fitted (as S.E. suggests).

The particularly expressive contribution of the Stoics consists in giving the striking image-analogies for tripartition we have already mentioned, of the egg, the living being, and the garden. But the deeply structural purport of the images was not retained by the historiographers and doxographers. It is undoubtedly the force of those images which gave the Stoics pride of place in the history of the establishment of the parts of philosophy.⁸³ Tripartition is signalled and discussed in the doxography through the image-analogies, often without an explicit mention of the Stoics.⁸⁴ But the main aspect which the images are meant to bring out, for the Stoics, namely the interdependence and interconnectedness of the parts, is left to the margins of the historiography on the parts of philosophy. For the Stoics, what really counts, when we talk about philosophy as divided into three, is not the parts in themselves but the interrelation between the parts. That is where the disagreement with the Peripatetics lies. The Peripatetics think of logic as a tool whose mastery enables a student to

⁸³ IERODIAKONOU 1993 p.57.

⁸⁴ E.g. Philo *Mut. Nom.* 74 where the garden analogy in particular is developed to explain what the three parts of philosophy are according to 'some from amongst the ancients' ('τῶν πάλαι τινές'). Not by chance, the garden is the weakest of the images and less revelatory of the Stoic insistence on the interdependence of the parts, and thus most suitable for the dumbed down analogy of a separable tripartite account of the constitutive parts of philosophy.

then move on to properly philosophical topics. They think of logic as a separate and separable body of knowledge. The Stoics think of logic in the same way as they think of physics and ethics, as equally sustaining a unified whole.

That the Peripatetics come to articulate this view (whether specifically against the Stoics, or not) shows that what is at stake in discussing tripartition is not tripartition itself, but the notion of parthood, and specifically the relation of parts to wholes: namely whether the parts in question make a full constitutive contribution to forming a whole (as it is for the Peripatetics, and logic does not satisfy the requirements) or whether ‘part’ here is said in a descriptive but not fundamental way (this is the Stoic view). For the Stoics it is not tripartition which is fundamental to philosophy, though the question of what constitutes a whole is crucial for them.

That logic is constitutive of the whole, for the Stoics, also suggests that what the Stoics think of as logic is not quite the same as what the Peripatetics have in mind. The role and status of *lekta* play no small role in this discrepancy, and to a great extent, explain why the Peripatetics make such a strong stand, against the Stoics, of not counting logic as a constitutive part of philosophy. For the Peripatetics adamantly reject the reality of *lekta*. Thus, for instance, if we take predication, for the Peripatetics, fundamentally, this is a relation between a property and a subject. For the Stoics, there is in addition a *lekton* which corresponds to a state-of-affairs that P (e.g. that Socrates is wise) which has a reality and conditions of reality which differ categorically from both the conditions of reality of the subject Socrates, and from those governing the property, wisdom. To accommodate *lekta* into reality is a huge and radical step, comparable in consequence to Plato’s introduction of the Forms, or Aristotle’s reportioning of reality in terms of substances. No wonder the clash between the Stoics and their rivals is insurmountable. It is the defence of the Stoics that we shall be examining throughout this book. It begins with the Stoic view of the interdependence of logic, ethics, and physics and their inseparability as parts. For it is the reality of states-of-affairs, which the Stoics call *lekta*, because they are what there is to be said, which cements the interdependence of the parts. For *lekta*, which are what is true or false, are the effects of causes, what we want to come true, and as such that towards which we direct our impulses for action. They are thus present, constitutively, in any account of reality, whether framed within a physical, ethical, or logical analysis.

Tripartition, for the Stoics, is thus a convenient way to map out—with the emphasis on interdependence—the complex structure, constituted of bodies and states-of-affairs, which is reality. S.E., and after him, most of the historiography concerning the tripartite foundation of philosophy, miss the original Stoic point. They attribute correctly to the Stoics a systematicity, but for the wrong reasons. The confusion is not without a connection to the confusion in the history of philosophy and reception of Stoic doctrine

regarding the place and role of the *lekton*. We have had a glimpse of the crucial role *lekta* play in the establishment of logic as a fully constitutive part of philosophy, on which all other parts depend. But *lekta* have been, from the earliest respondents to the Stoics, at best very much criticized and ultimately rejected (for instance by the Peripatetics, whose continued debate with the Stoics about the status of *lekta*, and in particular *axiōmata* (propositions), through generations of commentators, is a testimony to the importance and seriousness of the Stoic position); at worst, the theory of the reality of *lekta* is left aside as inconsequential because the role and status of *lekta* are misunderstood since they do not fit the standardized configurations, such as we find in S.E. for example. Minimizing the Stoic idiosyncratic account of the tripartition goes hand in hand with dismissing the importance of *lekta*.

Thus, to conclude, we should distinguish between a standardized account of tripartition such as was imparted to the tradition,⁸⁵ and the particular approach the Stoics have towards tripartition. To this end, we should consider the parts as different modes of description of one and the same thing: the logical structure of philosophy, the physical structure of philosophy, and the ethical structure of philosophy. The parts are distinct insofar as the descriptions they govern have different starting points. Thus the prerogative of the ethical account of reality is the behaviour of the individual directed towards alignment with cosmic reason as the goal of the individual's life (D.L. 7.84). The physical account of the structure of reality begins with cosmic reason, to end with the place and relation of the individual to it (D.L. 7.143). But the accounts are not separable, each involves and implies the other.

In our sources on the Stoics on tripartition, it is only when the Stoics insist on interconnectedness that the distinct names for the parts are mentioned. But when it comes to referring to the complexity of the structure of reality, the Stoics do not speak in terms of these parts at all—precisely because the parts do not play any foundational role in accounting for this structure. For this, the Stoics have recourse to the notion of a system: the *systema*.

1.3. THE STOIC NOTION OF A *SYSTEMA*

It is the Stoics who properly introduce into philosophical accounts the notion, so familiar to us, of a system in philosophy. They do this by charging the word for system, which we shall keep transliterated as '*systema*', with a structural

⁸⁵ The testimony of Isidore of Seville (however late, sixth to seventh century AD) in the *Etymologies*, a collection of titbits from the ancients, is a good representative not only of the standardized formula for tripartition of philosophy, but also of the tradition of the justification of tripartition as having always been present from the beginning of Greek philosophy. Thus, at *Etym.* II.24.3–6, Thales is named as the first to have established physics, Socrates, ethics, and Plato, logic.

and doctrinal purport which the word does not have until we find it in Stoic contexts. It is noteworthy, especially in light of the preceding discussion, that the Stoics do not make use of the term in contexts in which the tripartition of philosophy is discussed—precisely those contexts which, as we have seen, have allowed modern scholarship, from the nineteenth century onwards, to refer to the ‘Stoic system’ as a philosophical system made up of three parts. It will appear, by the end of this analysis, that the Stoics are indeed legitimately called systematic and have a philosophical system—and perhaps are the first philosophers to have one, properly speaking, in the Western tradition—but not for the reasons this has been assumed by most of the scholarship to date.

The notion of a *systema* appears in a number of different definitions, in a way which attests to a more doctrinally decisive use by the Stoics than any previous school. For the first time, the word ‘*systema*’ is used to describe fundamental associations in cosmology, epistemology, formal logic, or ethical doctrine. In contexts which pre-date the Stoics, a *systema* is used to refer to a closed, fixed, ordered group. Thus the cosmic harmony of the Pythagoreans is called a ‘*systema*’ made up of exactly three harmonic ratios.⁸⁶ This context of harmonic ratios is what Plato has Socrates refer to in the *Philebus* (17d2), when speaking of the fixed combinations of intervals, the ‘*systemata*’, which the ‘ancients were familiar with and transmitted to us under the name of harmonies’.

The associative aspect, relying in principle on a grouping of fixed numbers or ratios, is the grounding aspects of the notion of a *systema* as it appears in these pre-Stoic contexts. It seems likely that it is Plato himself, given the lack of other pre-Platonic occurrences, who transferred, on the basis of a metaphorical shift of the domain of application, the notion of a *systema* from the fixed association of harmonic ratios, to the notion of a *systema* as a fixed association of human beings. For instance, in the *Laws*, Plato refers to the historical alliance of the Dorians against the Assyrians as a ‘*systema*’ (*Leg.* 686b7). This usage is prepared a few lines earlier through a morphological and explanatory formula, as the alliance is said to be ‘τὴν συσταθείσαν σύνταξιν’ (*Leg.* 685c7–8): ‘an associative ordered configuration’, which is a somewhat heavy translation to match the particularly emphatic double use of the prefix ‘συν-’ and the practically synonymous verbs ‘συνιστάναι’ and ‘συντάττειν’. The Dorian alliance, conceived as an ordered configuration, is expressly referred to as ‘a single construction’ (‘κατασκευὴ μία’) though it is also circumstantially made up of parts into which it can be divided (‘διανεμηθείσα’).⁸⁷ Plato takes great care to unfurl the connotations of his use of ‘*systema*’, relying on a

⁸⁶ See S.E. *M.* 7.95, and on the ratios S.E. *PH* 3.155.

⁸⁷ The morphological moulding and melding here is evident: *συσταθείσαν* from *sunistanai* is loaded, through contagion both because of proximity and shared prefix, with the connotations of order from ‘*σύνταξις*’ which is conceptually tied to the notions of distribution and parcelling out, which are then explicit with the further use of *dianemein* at *Leg.* 685d3: this is circumstantial as Plato makes explicit by saying: ‘τότε διανεμηθείσα’, i.e. the alliance was ‘at that point parcellled

perfectly normal Greek usage of the verb ‘*sunistanai*’, from which the noun ‘*systema*’ derives, and which indicates the forming of associations—the first field of application being for political associations.⁸⁸ Plato thus helps set up the parameters by which an association counts as a *systema*. But these parameters also indicate the elasticity of the notion of a *systema*: a *systema* is now that which consists in an ordered configuration of a countable number of elements. Aristotle, in a passing remark in *EN*, exploits this elasticity in an analogy between the hierarchy in a state (*polis*), and ‘any other *systema*’, by which he means any other composite whole, for instance a human being (*anthrōpos*).⁸⁹

The Stoics extend the notion of a *systema* beyond its political connotations and root it in ontology, as the term qualifying the fundamental relations which support the structure of reality. Thus from a relatively flexible group designator, ‘*systema*’ becomes the term indicating a fundamental association between constituents of the world. The contexts in which the notion of a *systema* plays a role in Stoic analysis give us a radiographic multi-level map of the Stoic account of reality. It is not that there are many *systemata* but rather that, when the Stoics identify the cohesive structure of arguments as a *systema* (1.3.1 below), and the cohesive structure of knowledge as a *systema* (1.3.2 and 1.3.3 below) as also the cohesion around one and the same rationale of the cosmos as a *systema* (1.3.4 and 1.3.5 below), they thereby identify a unified complex structure governed by the same principle of cohesion in the different contexts, whether at the micro level of individual human beings’ epistemic states, or at the macro level of the cosmos.

Let us go through these different levels in which Stoic theory comes to determine and be determined by what will appear to be a specifically Stoic understanding of a *systema*.

1.3.1. The *Systema* as the Structure of Arguments

The Stoics say that a syllogism is a *systema* made up of premisses and a conclusion.⁹⁰ The premisses and conclusion are the constitutive elements, which go into producing one thing: the syllogism. Elsewhere, the Stoics say that a syllogism corresponds to a single *lekton* and not a juxtaposition of a number of *lekta*.⁹¹ In a critique of this characterization of the syllogism, S.E. refers to the syllogism rather as a ‘*systema* of *lekta*’.⁹² He means thereby to catch the

out’ into three cities (the number three is a pure coincidence, one for each brother, who were said to be the sons of Hercules).

⁸⁸ Cf. Hdt. 6.74 for the league of Arcadians against Sparta; Thuc. 6.16.6 where Alcibiades talks of the Peloponnesian alliances he made.

⁸⁹ Arist. *EN* 9.8, 1168b32–3.

⁹⁰ D.L. 7.45; S.E. *M.* 8.302, 385.

⁹¹ D.L. 7.63.

⁹² S.E. *PH* 3.107: ‘σύστημα λεκτῶν’.

Stoics in self-contradiction when they say that a *lekton* is a proposition, and at the same that it is the combination of propositions which make up a syllogism. The attack is thus aimed at the unity of the syllogism. But this is not quite accurate, since the Stoics do not, for instance, think the conclusion ('Therefore Q') of a syllogism is a proposition. In fact the Stoics do not think of a syllogism as pieced together from independent propositions.⁹³ This is a further example of how S.E. both provides us with crucial evidence about a particular Stoic use, namely that the Stoics think of a syllogism as a *systema*, and at the same time disregards the particularity of the Stoic account, here that a syllogism is one kind of *lekton*, understood as a single construct (precisely a *systema*).

The Stoics focus on what makes the unity of the syllogism: a syllogism is not a syllogism if it lacks any one of its premisses or its conclusion. In another passage (M. 8.385–6), S.E. belabours the Stoic use of '*systema*': the Stoics consider that the premisses and conclusion 'are contained' by the syllogism, or demonstration, for which variations on terms such as 'περιεχόμενον', 'ἐμπεριέχειν', 'ἐμπεριλαμβάνειν' serve to pad out the significance of the Stoic notion of a *systema*. S.E. further experiments with the Stoic view, wondering what would happen 'if the conclusion were left out', concluding that this would not be a syllogism at all, but 'an incomplete and unintelligible (or meaningless) thing'.⁹⁴ These questions will concern us later on (9.1.6 below), but the upshot for our present purposes are the requirements for a *systema* for the Stoics: a compound unit inclusive of all of its parts, which are constitutive of it. This implies that the absence of just one element not only jeopardizes the unity of the compound, but actually nullifies it completely. The notion of completeness, or wholeness, is indeed the heart of the matter here. A *systema* is either whole, or not at all.

1.3.2. The *Systema* as the Structure of Knowledge

The Stoics say that knowledge (*epistēmē*) or art (*technē*) is a *systema* of cognitive states (which the Stoics call *katalēpseis*).⁹⁵ Testimonies referring in particular to the knowledge possessed only by the wise man not only report descriptions of this state being a '*systema* made up of *kataleptic* states'⁹⁶ but

⁹³ D.L. 7.63; see more on this at 9.1.6 below.

⁹⁴ S.E. M. 8.389: 'τοῦτο γὰρ οὐδὲ λόγος ἐστὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀλλὰ πρᾶγμα ἐλλιπὲς καὶ ἀδιανόητον', 'for this is not even an argument but an incomplete and unintelligible thing'.

⁹⁵ *Katalēpseis* are intermediary epistemic states between belief and the solid knowledge of the wise man; they are available through assent to true or cognitive impressions (*phantasiai katalēptikai*): D.L. 7.52, 54; S.E. M. 7.151–2; Cic. *Acad.* 1.40–1. Knowledge is said to be a *systema* of such *katalēpseis* at S.E. M. 7.373, M. 11.182, *PH* 3.241; Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.51.6–8.

⁹⁶ Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.51.4: 'ἐπιστήμη σύστημα ἐκ καταλήψεων τοιοούτων'. Knowledge, compared to opinion (feeblest) and *katalēpsis* (intermediary) is the most unshakable of *kataleptic* states, *ibid.*: 'knowledge-*epistēmē* is but rock-solid *katalēpsis*' ('εἶναι δὲ τὴν ἐπιστήμην κατάληψιν ἀσφαλή'); see also D.L. 7.47; S.E. M. 7.151.

also double up the characterization by speaking of the truth (*hē alētheia*) as ‘systematic knowledge’.⁹⁷ More generally, whether the discussion revolves around the knowledge of the wise man, or whether *epistēmē* is referred to as a kind of *technē*, an art or science, it is described as a *systema*, and sometimes also as an *athroisma*, a collection or association. Truth (*alētheia*) is also described in these two ways: truth is ‘systematic knowledge’ and also ‘an association (*athroisma*) of many elements’. It is contrasted to a true thing, or what is true (*to alēthes*), which is only ‘of one kind’ (*monoeides*) and ‘simple’ (*haploun*)—and is, incidentally, an incorporeal *lekton*, whereas truth is a body (S.E. *M.* 7.40–1). Similarly, a *technē* is said to be a ‘*systema* and an *athroisma* of *katalēpseis*’ (S.E. *M.* 7.373). Thus knowledge or art or truth are the results not only of a certain kind of association of elements; they are more than that, they are also a *systema*, or ‘*systematic*’. They are, that is, a configured, constructed association, and not merely a random grouping, which is what a mere *athroisma* is like.⁹⁸

Knowledge or art is a *systema*, thanks to a rationale which makes every element of the association both necessary and constitutive. The term ‘*systema*’ is thus distinctively charged. This much is confirmed by the belaboured rendering into Latin by Cicero (through the mouthpiece of Cato in *Fin.* book 3) of the Stoic definition of ‘*artes*’. The plural, ‘*artes*’, indicates that we are talking about different areas of scientific knowledge, or sciences. The term conveniently covers both the Greek terms *epistēmē* and *technē*. But it is not the translation of these terms which is most at stake:

sciences [...] consist in states of cognition [Cicero’s ‘*cognitiones*’ for the Greek ‘*katalēpseis*’] and hold together something constituted by an internal rationale and also by an order.⁹⁹

There is a heavy-handedness, deliberately preserved in the English version here, in the three-fold unfolding of the definitional characteristics of a science. There are three clauses: one for what a science is made up of (out of states of cognition), one for what it is that keeps these states together (a constitutive and internal rationale), and one for how they are so kept (through order). Cicero, just a few lines earlier, had exonerated himself from such eventual linguistic heavy-handedness by warning that ‘as is [his] wont, if there is no

⁹⁷ S.E. *M.* 7.40: ‘ἐπιστήμη [...] συστηματική’. The truth is opposed to the true (τὸ ἀληθές) which is a proposition, cf. 1.1.7 above. See also LONG 2006c.

⁹⁸ Epicurus uses the term ‘*athroisma*’ to indicate an association of atoms which form any kind of aggregate: see Ep. *Her.* 62 where the movement of the atoms and their collisions with one another are examined within an *athroisma*, but see also Ep. *Her.* 63 in which soul is said to be a cluster of very fine atoms dispersed within an *athroisma*, and Ep. *Her.* 69 in which the specificities of the whole (*holon*) which makes up a body are contrasted with the random *athroisma* of any kind of aggregate of atoms.

⁹⁹ Cic. *Fin.* 3.18: ‘*Artes* [...] constent ex cognitionibus et contineant quiddam in se ratione constitutum et via.’

other way, where the Greek has only one word, [he] uses many to make that word clear' (*Fin.* 3.15). What is the Greek word which needs such a convoluted periphrasis to be properly explained in Latin? It can only be '*systēma*'. Cicero does not give a direct translation nor a transcription of it, though other terms, such as '*cognitiones*', are recognizable Latin versions of a Greek term (here, '*katalēpseis*'). Instead he provides us with a semantic symphony produced by the juxtaposition of the verbs '*constare*', '*continere*', and '*constituere*'. All together, these verbs are forcefully expressive of a special kind of grouping, distinctively bound by reason and order (*ratione et via*). The addition of the last clause '*et via*' ('and also by an order') might appear tautological, after having specified that there is an 'internal constitutive rationale' ('*in se ratione constitutum*'). But its inclusion indicates that this is a point emphasized in the original Greek which therefore needs to be clearly conveyed in the Latin. It is necessary to drive home what is distinctive about this definition of a science, namely that the body of knowledge it is, is specifically governed by order and an internal rationale which is specific to it (e.g. which will make optics distinct from geometry). This is Cicero's way of rendering the force of the emphatic pairing of '*systēma*' along with '*athroisma*' in our Greek sources. Indeed, Cicero's efforts echo the efforts deployed by Plato in the passage from the *Laws* mentioned above, to convey just how rationally binding and orderly the *systēma* of the Dorian alliance was. The insistence in Plato on the prefix '*sun-*' is echoed in Cicero, with his insistence on the prefix '*con-*'. Cicero is reacting to and interpreting the Stoics here, but in transferring the notion of a *systēma* into Latin, a similar process of terminological explanation is required as there was originally in Greek. It is apparent from Cicero's own difficulties here that the Stoic notion of a *systēma*, as something more than a mere grouping or aggregation, is original, and needs to be highlighted.

1.3.3. The *Systēma* as the Structure of an Art

A subset of definitions derives from the same core definition of knowledge, truth, or art-*technē* as a *systēma* of *katalēpseis*. These definitions develop into a more elaborate formula, specifically associated with the characterization of what counts as an art-*technē*, or science, which is:

a *systēma* of *katalēpseis* put into practice together¹⁰⁰

In most texts (but not all), a specific goal towards which the art is directed is also mentioned. The specific goal is what subsequently differentiates one art

¹⁰⁰ With an explicit Stoic affiliation: S.E. *PH* 3.188, 251: 'τέχνην δὲ εἶναι φασὶ σύστημα ἐκ καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένων'.

from another: e.g. to save lives and heal, for the art of medicine, and to persuade, for the art of rhetoric:

every art is *systema* of *katalēpseis* put into practice together with a goal in view, useful in life.¹⁰¹

The addition of ‘put into practice together’ answers, to all intents and purposes, the very same need we identified above, namely that of corroborating and clarifying the use of the term ‘*systema*’. There is the same emphatic echoing of the prefix ‘*sun-*’ (in ‘*sungegumnasmenon*’); and the participle itself, difficult to grasp precisely (practical or programmatically organizational?¹⁰²), is, in any case, giving a directive for how the systematicity of the *katalēpseis* is to be configured in the case of a specific art, and not knowledge at large. Being practised, engaged together, or ordered together, indicates that there is a certain kind of arranged interrelation between the *katalēpseis* involved. This, therefore, is not already implied by the use of ‘*systema*’. That is to say that ‘being practised together’ indicates more than a specific internal organization (which is the benchmark of the Stoic notion of a *systema*). Adding this specification thus restricts the domain of application of a *technē*: a specific art (rather than knowledge at large), relates to a restricted set of *katalēpseis*, namely all and only the *katalēpseis* necessary for the realization of the specific art in question (e.g. all the correct knowledge states concerned with harmony, musical theory, and piano technique for the art of playing piano, with the exclusion of anything to do with techniques of, say, bait-casting in fly-fishing, or anything else similarly alien to the art). There are just that many *katalēpseis* one can and needs to mobilize and thus practise together to produce the desired result. And not by chance, most relevant texts add the further specification of a *telos*, a goal, in order to better explain what ‘*sungegumnasmenon*’ contributes: the selection of those *katalēpseis* which are and can be practised

¹⁰¹ S.E. *M.* 2.10: ‘Πᾶσα τοίνυν τέχνη σύστημά ἐστιν ἐκ καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένων καὶ ἐπὶ τέλος εἰρηστον τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ’. See also Ps-Galen *Def. Med.* 19.350.7–8; Ps-Galen *Intr.* 685.4–5; Philo *Cong.* 141.2–3; ΣDion.Th. 2.24–5, 6.19–20, 8.32–9.1 (only the scholiast in this list makes explicit mention of the Stoics).

¹⁰² Cicero and Ps-Galen interpret it as organizational: Cicero with regard to the art of rhetoric (*ND* 2.148) glosses expansively: ‘we produce the arts by joining together [our relevant states of knowledge] and ordering them in relation one to another (‘conlatis inter se et comparatis’). The pair ‘conlatis et comparatis’ stands for ‘συγγεγυμνασμένοι’ rather than being a general gloss on *systema*, as we described above with *Fin.* 3.18, because the sentence then continues by analysing the goal of the arts in question: ‘either for the necessities of life or for pure delight’, which is a clear paraphrastic translation of the longer formula in the original Greek. As for Ps-Galen, *Intr.* 685.7–8, he focuses on the art of medicine, he explains ‘συγγεγυμνασμένοι’ by ‘continuous and consonant with each other and not disjointed’ (‘τουτέστι προσεχείς ἀλλήλαις καὶ συναδούσας, οὐχὶ ἀσυναρτήτους’). But when S.E. refutes the Stoic notion that there is an art of life (*PH* 3.188ff.), he implies that the Stoics take ‘καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένων’ as the injunction to practise all the virtues together on the basis of bringing to mind all the relevant *katalēpseis*. See BARNES 2015b p.88.

together are herded together in virtue of their, and not others', capacity to fulfil a certain (useful) purpose.

But where does one draw the line? At which point does a certain *katalēpsis* count as not necessary for the purpose of this or that art? After all, mastering the art of fly-fishing, as we learn from Izaak Walton's *The Compleat Angler*, is achieving contemplation of the laws of nature.¹⁰³ It is, in any case, far from clear that there is no overlap between the *katalēpseis* appealed to in various arts, which are seemingly as disparate as piano playing and fly-fishing. The wise man, for the Stoics, is the person who 'does everything well'. This is so, not because he has been trained in all the various arts, but because the wisdom of the wise consists in the proper appraisal of the law of reason, thanks to which they are able to engage the right *katalēpseis* at the right moment for the desired end (D.L. 7.125–6). The wise man is virtuous precisely because of this, that he is the person 'who can decide and put into practice what should be done' (*ibid.*). But again, for this to be so, the wise man has at his disposal all correct judgements, given that the virtues, for the Stoics, 'reciprocally involve one another',¹⁰⁴ being grounded on common principles (the *theōrēmata* mentioned in n.11 above).

The culmination of the definition of an art, as the practising together of the relevant *katalēpseis*, is the positing of an art of life, which is the 'practising together' of all the virtues, i.e. of all *katalēpseis*, which thus make up knowledge-*epistēmē*. Mastery of the art of life and the possession of knowledge-*epistēmē* coincide in the wise man. It follows that the subset of *systemata* devoted to specific arts is a concession to the non-wise or fools, who are in the process of learning and accumulating *katalēpseis*. All they (we) can aspire to is to engage a certain set of *katalēpseis* in view of a specific goal, though we miss the broader overlaps and super-positioning of all the *katalēpseis* which make up knowledge-*epistēmē*. The notion of a *systema* is thus not splintered into the smaller-scale *systemata* relevant to the different arts. Rather, the *systema* is always one and the same (the same ordered association of all that there is to know, which is governed by reason). However, from the perspective of the fallible (and foolish) human individual, only some of these *katalēpseis* can be grasped.

The longer formula in which an art is defined along with its specific end is found in texts which are neither Stoic nor represent a Stoic view. It is apparent that the formula becomes not only a piece of common intellectual property, but significantly also one of the stock formulae for a working definition of an art.¹⁰⁵ For instance, in the wide-ranging debate about whether rhetoric is an

¹⁰³ WALTON 1676 p.42ff.

¹⁰⁴ D.L. 7.125: 'ἀντακολουθεῖν ἀλλήλαις'.

¹⁰⁵ We find it translated almost word for word by Quintilian (2.17.41): 'artem constare ex perceptionibus consentientibus et coexercitatis ad finem utilem vitae', who adds: 'ab omnibus fere probatus' ('it is practically accepted by everyone'). Of course 'accepted' does not imply that it is the definitive definition, but it is one amongst many which are current and acceptable. Lucian of Samosata uses the formula in his satirical piece *The Parasite*, applying the definition to

art, the formula is one of the definitions on which S.E. focuses his attack (*M.* 2.10) and to which Quintilian appeals (see previous n.105); and which later fifth-century commentators on various *arts of rhetoric*, in particular, and participants in debates about rhetoric, enumerate as one amongst a set list of definitions for a *technē*.¹⁰⁶ The Stoic origin of the formula is certain (and is recalled occasionally¹⁰⁷), but its appearance in these debates is not a defence of, or attack on the Stoics, rather its sustained appeal is in the purport of the notion of a *systema* that it sets out.

Historiography here again helps us discern the Stoic input and influence on the tradition. That S.E., Ps-Galen, Cicero, Olympiodorus, and Sopater not only quote the formula but go to some length to unpack what is implied by ‘*systema*’ and the *katalēpseis* being ‘*sungegumnasmenai*’ (rather than fixating on what a *katalēpsis* is in the first place—as any author, critical or not, does in discussing the Stoics on this question) testifies to the significance and richness of the notion of a *systema* as a dynamic all-engaging unity. At the same time, not surprisingly, the more fine-grained elements of the specifically Stoic point get brushed aside.¹⁰⁸

There is fundamentally one *systema*. Its ordering principle is reason. This is important to see, because the way the Stoics discuss the *systema* at the micro level of what grounds the logical structure of an argument (1.3.1) and the structure of knowledge (1.3.2) reflects, and is not distinct from the way the Stoics discuss the *systema* at the macro level of the cosmos. The cosmos as *systema*, is the complex in which it is human beings and all there is in reality which is accounted for as the constituents of the *systema*: from an ethical perspective as the cosmic city (1.3.4), and from the cosmological and physical perspective by which the *systema* holds all the constituents together according to the ordering principal, fixing the boundaries of the universe (1.3.5).

describe the art of being a parasite (*Par.* 4 and 8); that Lucian off-handedly makes use of the formula is a further sign of its being well-known enough to be made fun of. It is presumably also the definition Philodemus has in mind, though the wording is not a precise calque, at *Rhet.* II. xxxvii.2–15. On the convergence, see BARNES 2015b p.89f.

¹⁰⁶ Diomedes in *GL* 2.421 citing Cicero as his source; Olympiodorus in *Plat. Gorg.* 2.2.6, 12.1.8, 12.1.17–22; Sopater in *RG* 5.4.6, 5.18.11; Syrianus in *RG* 4.54.13

¹⁰⁷ E.g. by Olympiodorus in *Plat. Gorg.* 12.1.17 where it is referred back to Zeno, and contrasted to different Chrysippean and Cleanthean definitions.

¹⁰⁸ It is noteworthy in this respect to highlight the change, in later references, from ‘*συγγεγυμνασμένων*’ (which qualifies the *katalēpseis*, in agreeing in case and number (genitive plural) with the genitive plural ‘*καταλήψεων*’), to a neuter singular, agreeing with ‘*σύστημα*’-*σύστημα*’ and thus qualifying the *systema* and no longer the *katalēpseis*. The shift goes from ‘*σύστημα ἐκ καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένων*’ to ‘*σύστημα ἐκ καταλήψεων συγγεγυμνασμένον*’ (in Sopater, Olympiodorus and Syrianus, see n.106). This indicates that in the later appropriation of the notion of a *systema*, ‘*συγγεγυμνασμένον*’ became a qualifier of *systema* more than of the interrelation of the *katalēpseis* (which, in any case, were never assimilated into general contexts of discussion, in the historiographical tradition, but always confined to representing a Stoic oddity).

1.3.4. The *Systēma* as Structure of the Cosmos: the Cosmic City

For the Stoics, the city is first and foremost a meeting of minds: for it is the exemplification of a communion in right reason (*orthos logos*) of all beings capable of accessing right reason. Communion in right reason comes down to following and living by the law, because on Stoic doctrine law is identified with right reason.¹⁰⁹ To act according to reason and to act according to the law is one and the same thing. Rational beings (humans and gods) make up the city by living lawfully. The city is thus the place where one lives lawfully, abiding by the law. Only man and god, together and exclusively (in virtue of their access to reason), inhabit the only city, properly speaking, the lawful city.¹¹⁰ It follows that the confines of this city are determined by the presence of its inhabitants: wherever there are gods and men, that is where the city is. But it is the cosmos which has those confines, hence the cosmos is the cosmic city, the city where men and gods live in communion in reason and whose inhabitants are, it follows, properly speaking, cosmopolitans.¹¹¹

1.3.4.1. The Local City and the Cosmic City

We can see how two cities take shape: the city properly speaking, abiding by the law of reason, and the city derivative on the latter, which bears external similarities to it. The city properly speaking is the city which conforms to the definition proposed: its location turns out to be the cosmos because that is the domain which satisfies the requirements of the definition. The cosmic city is not primarily locative, i.e. neither a particular place nor a place to live in. But it

¹⁰⁹ D.L. 7.88; Cic. *Leg.* 1.23; Dio Chrysost. *Or.* 36.20, on the Stoic credentials of this last text, see SCHOFIELD 1999 p.60ff. and commentary *ad loc.* by RUSSELL 1992 p.221f.

¹¹⁰ Cic. *ND* 2.154: 'the world (*mundus*) is so to speak the common abode of gods and men, or the city that belongs to both (*urbs utrorumque*)'.

¹¹¹ Cic. *Fin.* 3.64; Cic. *Leg.* 1.23; Cic. *ND* 2.154; Arius Didymus *apud* Eusebius *PE* 15.15.5. Dio Chrysost. *Or.* 36.23. SCHOFIELD 1999 p.67ff. VOGT 2008 p.65ff. As to god, or the gods: the Stoics talk about god (in the singular) as identical with reason, the cosmos, or providence (D.L. 7.135 and 137). But the Stoics often put forward arguments for the existence of god in plural terms: thus Zeno (S.E. *M.* 9.133ff.) defends the claim that 'one may reasonably honour the gods'; Chrysippus (Cic. *ND* 2.16) argues on the basis of the conditional 'if gods do not exist...', after having argued that there must be something superior to man 'which we call god' (in the singular), see MEIJER 2007, *esp.* chs. II and VI. For what qualifies as a god, given the requirements of perfect reason, VOGT 2008 p.135ff. shows that the best candidates for the Stoic gods might ultimately turn out to be the planets, as suggested by Zeno: Stob. *Ecl.* 1.25.5.3, or Cic. *ND* 2.15. But see FREDE 2005 p.230f.: planets and stars are divine only insofar as their soul is never separated from their bodies (cf. Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1075C), therefore there is actually only one God, who produces all there is in the cosmos, including the divine, and immortal stars and planets (immortal, at least until the conflagration), which are thus gods by extension. In the texts we discuss in this chapter, these immortal gods are included in the cosmic *systēma*. We thus refer to the gods, in the plural, as part of the cosmic city.

comes to be both a particular place, the universe, and also the place inhabited by its citizens, because that is where human beings and the gods are.

But there is another city, derivative on the cosmic city, which is purely circumstantial and primarily locative. It is the city a person might happen to live in, due to his or her '*condicio nascendi*', 'circumstance of birth'.¹¹² Thus in a report by Clement:

The Stoics say that the universe is, in the proper sense, a city, but that the cities here on earth are not—they are called cities but are not really. For the city or the people is something morally good, a civilized connective system (*systema*) or group of human beings administered by law.¹¹³

There are a number of points to raise about this passage, which concern, first of all, the somewhat surprising attribution to the Stoics of what seems to be, to all intents and purposes, a form of idealism redolent of the Platonic ideal city.¹¹⁴ The description seems in effect to be much closer to a Platonic paradigm city than to the pragmatic account which we would have expected from the Stoics.

It is not our purpose here to go into the details of the socio-political principles which govern the cosmic city. Our concern is with what is revealed about the notion of a *systema*. But it will turn out that what is implied by a *systema* here determines elements of cosmic socio-political principles, in the main the dependence of the latter on the logical structure of the cosmos. Katja Vogt (2008 p.67ff.) especially has contributed to reconciling the seeming idealism of this piece of Stoic political theory with the fundamentally anti-Platonic, anti-Idealist, core of Stoic doctrine. She pushes the inclusivist interpretation of the cosmic city, which thus contains not only the wise alongside god, or the gods, i.e. not only those who knowingly and capably live by the law of reason, but all human beings—effectively all of us. For every being endowed with reason, and in virtue of this, contributes to the consolidation of the identity relation between cosmic nature and law, the grounding coordinates of the cosmic city. Thus most human beings, though not wise, by merely participating in reason (in virtue of their nature as rational beings) are

¹¹² Sen. *Otio* 4.1: contrasting the two kinds of *res publicae*: 'the great and real common state (*res publica*) containing gods and men [...] the boundaries of this city (*civitas*) being measured by the extremities reached by the sun, and the other kind, ascribed to us through the condition of our birth'.

¹¹³ Clem. *Strom.* 4.26.172.2 (= *SVF* iii.327). The translation here is only lightly modified from SCHOFIELD 1999 p.24: 'λέγουσι γάρ καὶ οἱ Στωϊκοὶ τὸν μὲν οὐρανὸν κυρίως πόλιν, τὰ δὲ ἐπὶ γῆς ἐνταῦθα οὐκέτι πόλεις· λέγεσθαι μὲν γάρ, οὐκ εἶναι δέ· σπουδαῖον γὰρ ἡ πόλις καὶ ὁ δῆμος ἀστυεῖον τι σύστημα καὶ πλῆθος ἀνθρώπων ὑπὸ νόμου διοικούμενον'.

¹¹⁴ The immediate context in the *Stromata* is the Christian idealization of the city of cities, Jerusalem, referred to in the immediately preceding sentence. This also explains the imported Christian terms for the contrast between heaven (*οὐρανός*), here translated as 'universe', and earth (*γῆ*).

members of the cosmic city. The fundamental assumption is that by having reason, one cannot *not* make use of it, regardless of getting things right or wrong according to right reason.¹¹⁵ The additional, more subtle point in Vogt's analysis is to remove the assumption of identity between reason (the law) and right reason, by shifting the dichotomy between right reason and unreason to reason and right reason. The dichotomy is thus projected onto a grounding distinction between reason as the law of nature, and right reason as subject to the contingencies of circumstance (individual and general). There is no universal standard for right reason but the proper action which follows from right reason is dependent on a person's circumstances. Thus, though the wise man will always get it right, the fool will sometimes get it right too, thanks to sometimes having *katalēpsis*. For the fool will sometimes recognize a true or *kataleptic* impression, which impels him to act rightly and makes it possible for him to progress.¹¹⁶ This validates the fool's place in the cosmic city, not because of the possibility of his attaining right reason, but merely—that is, fundamentally—by his unavoidably making use of reason.

The bond is further tightened between the cosmos (governed by reason and containing all there is, see D.L. 7.140) and the law of nature (which is reason). For all rational beings are subject to the law of reason, whether they attain right reason or not, by the mere fact of participating in reason. Thus Clement attributes to the city, properly speaking, the morally good (*spoudaion*) and the civilized (*asteion*), not because it is an ideal city where everyone is perfect, good, and wise but because its principle of cohesion is participation in reason. The contrast he makes with the derivative cities (for they are plural compared to the single cosmic city), which, he says, are not cities at all, consists in the absence, in these cities, of the rule of reason.

Two conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, Vogt succeeds in distancing the Stoic discussion of the cosmic city from a dialogue exclusively concerned with Plato, and a discussion of utopian, or ideal, cities. Rather the concerns the Stoics are shown to have are not only more stratified but, more than anything,

¹¹⁵ This is the assumption on which the Stoic theory of *oikeiōsis*, or appropriation, relies: human beings are distinct from animals in that they move on, from a first, irrational impulse for self-preservation, to an impulse which appropriates (by extending the impulse for preservation), firstly, to the surrounding rational beings, recognized as similar to oneself because of their share in reason, then to all such beings, reaching as far as the boundaries of the cosmos. And this occurs naturally, through the natural development of reason, as described by Hierocles in Stob. *Ecl.* 4.27.23.14ff.; D.L. 7.86; Cic. *Fin.* 3.21 and 63.

¹¹⁶ S.E. *M.* 7.150f.: the fool can sometimes have *katalēpsis*, that is why *katalēpsis* is an intermediary state—or else there is no such state, but only completely fallible belief for the fool and unshakeable knowledge for the wise (see S.E. *M.* 7.157f.; Cic. *Acad.* 1.41–6). Seneca integrates the possibility of *katalēpsis* for the fool in the distinction he makes, at *Ep.* 92.27, between the '*ratio consummata*' of the gods and the '*ratio consummabilis*' of the humans: humans and gods are similar in that they have reason (*ratio*) but whereas with the gods, reason is there, complete in itself, *ratio* in humans is perfectible, which implies that it develops: thus perfect rationality can be achieved and indeed is to be achieved.

are self-fuelled by internal requirements for doctrinal consistency with other Stoic tenets and commitments (to moral progress, to the natural development of reason, to the theory of appropriation). It comes down to the impossibility of *not* making use of reason in deliberation (even if we end up making the wrong decision). The standard for participation in the cosmic city is clear: the use of one's reason which, merely in virtue of being used, propels its owner ever closer to right reason.¹¹⁷

Secondly, the dual citizenship which Seneca articulates, that of the cosmic city and that of the local city (see n.112 above) is now upheld not as a matter of choice, but as a matter of actual fact. All rational beings (the fools, the wise, and the gods) are citizens of the cosmic city in virtue of what they are, by nature: beings of reason and therefore beings who reason. Insofar as there are some from amongst all of these who are also, by nature, subject to the contingencies of circumstance (which is the reason why, on some—or most—occasions, there will be a discrepancy between reason and right reason), these are also granted a second citizenship, that of their particular circumstance, which is a local city. It is derivative on the cosmic city because it is locative before being logical. The gods are not included in these cities, as they are by definition exempt from dependencies on circumstances.¹¹⁸ It follows that, though it is not a question of degree of perfect reasoning which determines citizenship in the cosmic city, it is the question of degree which determines citizenship in the local city. Anyone falling short, or possibly falling short, of perfect right reason necessarily has dual citizenship.¹¹⁹ What is more, it is the citizenship of the cosmic city which is prior and most

¹¹⁷ For the Stoics, a person is drowning (i.e. is a fool and vicious) whether he is just below the surface or deep below the sea; wisdom and virtue lie above the surface, cf. Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1063A; D.L. 7.127. But, though a person is vicious until he is utterly virtuous, and there are thus no degrees of virtue, it is possible for human beings to perfect their reason, and one begins doing that from the mere fact of reasoning, Cic. *ND* 2.33–4; D.L. 7.128–9.

¹¹⁸ Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 881F: 'the Stoics say that god is pure thought (νοερόν)'.

¹¹⁹ The wise man is 'like a god', but is not god (D.L. 7.119). Does this imply that he is fallible? As suggested by BROUWER 2014 p.66f., this question derives from a late Christianized reading, and misses the Stoic point. The wise man's existence need not be proven like the existence of god (this, I take it, is the underlying first objection Zeno makes, when, to his argument for the existence of the gods, a counter-argument is posed for the existence of the wise man: it is wrong to consider that the two are interchangeable at all (at S.E. *M.* 9.133)). The wise man is the man who has knowledge-*epistēmē* and can fulfil the human *telos* of living according to nature, but that only means he can fulfil to the utmost his role as a human being endowed with reason in the cosmos. He is not god and cannot be evaluated on the same criteria as god. See BROUWER 2014 p.68ff. on the criteria by which to judge what he calls 'the radical change' from fool to sage. We know that there were debates within the Stoic school on whether the wise man can lose his virtue: Chrysippus claimed he could, Cleanthes that he could not (D.L. 7.127). The mere possibility, however, distinguishes the wise man decisively from a god. The wise man is therefore also a holder of dual citizenship, he will presumably always act according to right reason in his local city as he does in the cosmic city, but his actions in the local, derivative city are dependent on circumstance (the right action is not always the same in the local city) in a way that they are not in the cosmic city.

important, precisely because it does not depend on a question of degree. For by reasoning (however badly) we always fulfil the requirement of our citizenship to the cosmic city. This is the thought which underlies Cicero's inference about the pre-eminence of the cosmopolis in *Fin.* book 3: it follows, Cicero notes, that, from the constitution of the cosmic city, made up of men and gods, 'it is natural to conclude that we put the good of this common city before our own individual interest'.¹²⁰ This is so, not on account of a virtuous self-sacrifice, which is an alien notion to the Stoics, but because the first and binding commitment to reason of every rational being impels him or her to follow the law of reason.

1.3.4.2. The *Systēma*, or the Logical Principle of the Cosmic City

What does the notion of a *systēma* contribute here? The *systēma* is the structure of the cosmic city, and only of the cosmic city, not its derivative, local avatar. Clement (in the passage quoted in n.113 above) echoes the explanatory formulae we have already come across: 'a kind of connective system' ('*ti systēma*'). He explains this further as 'a group administered by the law'. The two core aspects we have already identified as essential when it comes to pinpointing what makes a *systēma* for the Stoics are reiterated here: a grouping together, not of any kind, but one that is governed by an ordering principle, the law of nature (i.e. reason). In other words, the distinction between the cosmic city and the derivative, locative, city can now be re-articulated in terms of a distinction between a structure, the *systēma*, and something which lacks that structure because it is governed by more than one principle. The derivative city, true enough, is a certain grouping together of men and women; it is, for this reason, similar to a city. But this is not the kind of association which makes up a *systēma*. It is a grouping which lives at the mercy of circumstance, its laws are subject to change and degrees of distance from right reason, which is reflected by the actions of the people who make up this avatar city. The notion of a *systēma* therefore is not so much a quality leap from a flimsily structured society to a better organized association of the same people (plus the gods), but an utterly different understanding of what an association consists in. The ordering principle, the law of reason, makes the *systēma*, and makes the cosmic city a *systēma*.

The notion of a *systēma* is therefore not a sociological or ethical qualifier but a logical one, which fixes, according to one and the same rationale, the relations between all of its constitutive members. It is, in effect, the proper

¹²⁰ Cic. *Fin.* 3.64: 'quasi commune urbem et civitatem hominum et deorum [...] ex quo illud natura consequi ut communem utilitatem nostrae anteponamus', 'it is like a city or civic community made up of men and gods [...] from which it is natural to conclude that we put the good of this common city before our own individual interest'.

logical term by which to describe the structure of reality. It sets out the logical relation between each and every component, from which ethical and political consequences will follow. But the *systema* itself is not a term indicating an ethics. The *systema* indicates the logical framework of the cosmic city. There is indeed an ambiguity in the use of the term 'city', both as a logical construct and an indicator of an ethics, insofar as certain models of behaviour are thereby implied. The Stoic notion of a *systema* captures the distinction, so important to the early Stoics, between the logical structure and the ethical dimension which follows from it.

Clement, as already suggested, has a specific agenda: as a Christian and a founding father of the Christian Church, he recasts the Stoic cosmic city as an image of the perfected city (the ideal Jerusalem) and ultimately the city of god.¹²¹ His interest is not to distinguish a logical structure from the ethics it underscores, rather the opposite: namely he conflates logical structure with ethical purport, all the better to condemn the avatar cities, which are ethically blameworthy because they lack logical structure. In his efforts to show this, he belabours the radical separation between the cosmic city, the city 'properly speaking', and the avatar.

But we should be wary of him here, as a faithful transmitter of Stoic thought. For the Stoics are not ideologists nor idealists, they do not deny that what we call a city (the place we live in), is a city. Rather, they say that what we call a city is a city for certain precise reasons. By committing to those reasons (which are not geographical, though they have geographical consequences), we can then extend its boundaries to those of the cosmos. Clement, however, ends up taking 'city' to be a metaphorical use when applied to the cities we inhabit. For he speaks of the city 'properly speaking' in contrast to the city which is not really a city. Thus Clement is useful for us in highlighting the standard of rationality which underlies the *systema* as the logical structure which upholds the cosmic city. But he extracts this crucial tenet out of a more dialectical context which integrates, rather than excludes, our own cities as we know them. Other texts, more historiographical and doxographical in tenor, give less emphasis to a contrast between the cosmic city and the smaller-scale inhabited cities. They rather iterate the structural connections at the heart of what constitutes a city as a *systema* for the Stoics.

First a passage from the doxography of Arius Didymus, which we find quoted by Eusebius:

the cosmos is said to be a *systema* of heaven, air, earth, and sea and of the natural things within them; the cosmos is also said to be the dwelling-place of gods and

¹²¹ See SPANNEUT 1957 *esp.* p.256f. and ANDRÉ 1993 *esp.* pp.131–40, who, though focusing on Lactantius, brings out both the implicit dialogue of the early Church Fathers with the Stoics, and the tendency to override it, all the better to set out the terms for equality and justice amongst all citizens.

men, or what is constituted by the association of gods, men, and of all things come into being for their sake. For just as a city is said in two ways: (i) insofar as it is a dwelling-place and (ii) insofar as it is a *systema* constituted by the inhabitants [slaves, children et al.] together with the citizens, in the same way, the cosmos is like a city in that it is a *systema* constituted by gods and men whereby the gods are the ruling part and the men are subordinate. There is a community between them because they both partake in reason which is natural law.¹²²

Parallel to this text, a second passage, found in Stobaeus, also drawn from Arius Didymus,¹²³ reports Cleanthes' syllogism about the city, with an explanatory coda:

if a city is a habitable construction to which people may have recourse for the dispensation of justice, then a city is surely a civilized place. But a city is this sort of habitation. Therefore, a city is a civilized place. But a city is said in three ways, with reference to habitation, with reference to a connective system [*systema*] of human beings, and thirdly with reference to both of these together. In two senses the city is called civilized: (i) when it refers to a *systema* of human beings and (ii) when it refers to both, because of the reference to the inhabitants.¹²⁴

Both passages appear to derive from a common source because of the parallelism in terminology. They both report the core elements of a discussion of the Stoic claim that 'city' is said in two ways. Both attempt to elucidate the common grounds for this double application. In the passage from Eusebius, the focus is on the notion of a *systema* as the fundamental characteristic of a city which binds the locative city to the cosmic city. In Stobaeus, the first half of the passage relates Cleanthes' syllogism, which is then, in the second half, commented on critically, presumably by Arius' source, by questioning the key terms of the major and minor premisses. The commentator chronicles how the Stoics understand these terms in more than one way: what application of the words 'city' and 'civilized' is Cleanthes relying on? The critique of the

¹²² Arius Didymus *apud* Eusebius PE 15.15.3–5: 'λέγεσθαι δὲ κόσμον σύστημα ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἀέρος καὶ γῆς καὶ θαλάττης καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς φύσεων· λέγεσθαι δὲ κόσμον καὶ τὸ οἰκητήριον θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων <καὶ> <τὸν ἐκ θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων> καὶ τῶν ἔνεκα τούτων γενομένων συνεστῶτα. ὃν γὰρ τρόπον πόλις λέγεται διχῶς, τό τε οἰκητήριον καὶ τὸ ἐκ τῶν ἐνοικούντων σὺν τοῖς πολίταις σύστημα, οὕτως καὶ ὁ κόσμος οἰοῖναι πόλις ἐστὶν ἐκ θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων συνεστῶσα, τῶν μὲν θεῶν τὴν ἡγεμονίαν ἐχόντων, τῶν δὲ ἀνθρώπων ὑποτεταγμένων. κοινωνίαν δ' ὑπάρχειν πρὸς ἀλλήλους διὰ τὸ λόγου μετέχειν, ὅς ἐστι φύσει νόμος.'

¹²³ On Stobaeus' relation and dependence on Arius Didymus, cf. ΚΑΗΝ 1983. The whole of chapter 7 in book 2 of Stobaeus' *Eclogae* is an excerpt from the author Stobaeus refers to as Arius Didymus (cf. Stob. Ecl. 2.7.1: 'From the Epitome of Didymus').

¹²⁴ Stob. Ecl. 2.7.11i.63: 'Πόλις μὲν <εἰ> ἐστὶν οἰκητήριον κατασκευάσμα, εἰς δὲ καταφεύγοντας ἔστι δίκην δοῦναι καὶ λαβεῖν, οὐκ ἀστέιον δὲ πόλις ἐστίν; ἀλλὰ μὴν τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν ἡ πόλις οἰκητήριον· ἀστέιον ἄρ' ἐστὶν ἡ πόλις. Τριχῶς δὲ λεγομένης τῆς πόλεως, τῆς τε κατὰ τὸ οἰκητήριον καὶ τῆς κατὰ τὸ σύστημα τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τρίτον τῆς κατ' ἀμφοτέρω τούτων, κατὰ δύο σημαίνόμενα λέγεσθαι τὴν πόλιν ἀστέιαν, κατὰ τε τὸ σύστημα τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ κατὰ τὸ συναμφοτέρον διὰ <τὴν εἰς> τοὺς ἐνοικούντας ἀναφορὰν'.

major premiss (formally homogenized thanks to the minimal, and generally accepted, insertion of an 'if' ('*εἰ*' after the first '*μὲν*') by the eighteenth-century editor Heeren), focuses on there being a distinction between being inhabited and being a *systema*, on Stoic doctrine. It is implied that Cleanthes seems to think this is the same thing. This would suggest a further emendation to the text (which is in a corrupt state). Namely where we have, in Wachsmuth's printed edition of 1909, the slightly unexpected (in this context) '*κατασκέυασμα*' in the first line, the text would read better if we had: '*καὶ σύστημα*'. This would make the commentator's immediate questioning of the characterization of the city as a *systema*, a fluid continuity from the presentation of the syllogism. But with or without this emendation, the questions raised by the commentator are clear enough.

How is it that a city is both the place we live in and a *systema*? This is the question at the heart of both texts, and it is a question because—and it can only be because—the Stoics do not think of a *systema* as that which describes the place we live in. It is a term which describes something completely different from a place or habitation, something which belongs to a completely different ontological category.

Our texts confirm that the notion of a *systema* is one that isolates logical characteristics, which are not to be confused with physical and ethical attributes of place and social behaviour and expectations. In Eusebius, 'city' is said to apply sometimes to the latter attributes covered by the term 'dwelling-place', and sometimes, distinct from what is implied by a dwelling-place, to a *systema*. In Stobaeus, a third tier is adduced whereby 'city' is also said when both the physical and ethical attributes of a dwelling-place and the logical structure of the *systema* are implied together. This third option is important insofar as in the Stobaeus passage where it is enunciated, the cosmic city is not mentioned—whereas it is in Eusebius. It is not too far-fetched to surmise that this third option corresponds to the unmentioned cosmic city, insofar as the cosmic city is a dwelling-place (it corresponds, after all, to the cosmos which has a physical definition recalled at the start of the Eusebius passage, on which more below), which is upheld by the logical framework, which corresponds to the *systema*.

Is it possible to make good on this third option? That is to say, can a perfectly rational structure, which is the *systema*, hold together a real inhabited dwelling-place? Both texts skirt around this question in different ways. In Eusebius, we find some filling-in as to how the ordering principle of a *systema* translates into a hierarchy: between superior status inhabitants and inferiors, a relation which is then adduced in support of the analogy with the cosmic city, in which gods are superior to men. This added hierarchy stipulation is not convincing for a number of reasons. First and foremost, because it violates the main characteristic of a *systema*, namely that it is structured on the basis of one, and only one, cohesive rationale. The passage ends by saying as

much—and thus contradicts itself—when it concludes on the communion in reason, which makes the association of humans and god a *systema* in the first place. For the subordination of humans to gods implies the additional measuring up of the ordering principle, i.e. reason, with perfected reason. But as we saw above, it is not perfect reason which governs the *systema*, which would then describe the association of only the gods and perhaps the wise. And both ordering principles, reason and perfect reason, cannot be on a par. It is through reasoning (because we possess reason) that we can hope to perfect our reason: that is a question of ethics. But this cannot influence the fixed structure which governs the order of nature. And so the cohesive principle of the *systema* cannot be that of perfect reason (ethics), but must be a logical principle, independent of any presumed efforts to make moral and epistemological progress on behalf of individual participants in the *systema*. It is, moreover, this logical principle which enables them to make progress, precisely because they are not assigned a fixed place in a hierarchy.¹²⁵ This is reason, *logos*. Nowhere else is the hierarchy point mentioned in the context of these discussions, which further discredits its authentic Stoic origin.

The more Stoically authentic perspective is the development of the notion of urbanity (*asteion*) which is set out in Cleanthes' argument. In Greek, as in English (*via* Latin), there is a semantic play on the doublet urban-urbanity, city-civilized, *astu-asteion*, which is emphasized in the play on '*asteia polis*' ('the urbane city') which concludes the syllogism. But Cleanthes is not merely making a pun. He takes the doublet to capture something about what a proper definition of a city should contain. The adjectival form (urbane) captures both the logical requirement of a *systema* and the conformity with it of the inhabitants of a dwelling-place. There is, in other words, no urbane or civilized dwelling-place without there being a structuring *systema* which grounds it.¹²⁶

There is a compatibility between the logical structure and the ethical requirements which necessarily follow from it, insofar as there is one and only one ordering principle which governs the whole structure. An idealist

¹²⁵ Everything in the cosmos that is not endowed with reason is placed there by the ordering principle for the sake of rational beings, so that every natural being stands in relation to every other, regardless of the stage it has reached in perfecting reason; see D.L. 7.138; Cic. *Fin.* 3.67; Cic. *DN* 2.154–5. LATOUR 2017 *esp.* ch.18, in his diagnosis of contemporary ills, theorizes the need to establish, or re-establish, a 'generative system', based on the dependence-connexions between each and every terrestrial inhabitant, in accordance with his, her or its capacities for autonomy. This is, at heart, the re-discovery of the city of reason of the Stoics, sustained by a unifying rationale. Latour does not speak of a system *tout court*; his need to qualify it mirrors our own recourse to the transliterated *systema* to highlight the specificity of the Stoic view, anticipating the specificity of the generative interlinked system advocated by Latour.

¹²⁶ SCHOFIELD 1999 p.137ff. argues for a translation of '*ἀστυεῖον*' as 'morally good' rather than 'refined' or 'civilized' which belong to features of behaviour and speech, and not to ethics. Schofield shows how being *asteion* becomes a characteristic of the wise man and thus of perfected reason. But this is going further than Cleanthes here, or the ancient source commentator, who seems to be more interested in sticking to the implications of the lexical doublet.

like Clement would say that there is a proviso: they are compatible only provided the inhabitants of the city as dwelling-place align their behaviour and social arrangements on the reason which configures the *systema*. The Stoics say this is not a proviso, but built-in to the theory, since, whether they are conscious of it or not, striving towards right reason or not, by the mere use of their reason, all rational beings submit their behaviour to the law of reason. There is, for this reason, a basic circularity in Cleanthes' argument: a city should be civilized because it is a *systema*, and it is a *systema* because it is civilized. The commentator tries to unravel the circularity by pointing out that 'civilized' means at the same time a city structured by a *systema* and the consequence of that structured city, namely an inhabited dwelling-place structured by a *systema*.¹²⁷

It is not by chance that we discover in the analysis of the Stoic notion of a *systema*, a question concerning the relation and compatibility of logic, ethics, and physics. But the set-up now is rather different from the question of a tripartitioning of philosophy. The question now is of a systematic integration of ethics and physics within the logical structure of the cosmos. Because of the very nature of the cosmic *systema*, as it is analysed by the Stoics, it is necessary that ethical and physical requirements align with the cohesive principal which makes the *systema* a *systema*. This comes down to considering ethics, physics, and logic as different articulations, which ultimately map out the one and only *systema* which upholds the cosmos. It is unhelpful to think of a Stoic *systema* as having parts, at least not in the way the defenders of a tripartitioning of philosophy, as the basis of the Stoic system, think of 'parts'. That there is a logic, an ethics, and a physics which are articulated as integral expressions of the system, does not entail that these are three separable parts of the system. Before we draw some definitive conclusions about the *systema*, we must round

¹²⁷ The four *personae* theory, presented at length by Cicero in *Off.* 1.107–16, probably drawn from Panaetius, makes the same point, as the first two *personae* in particular rearticulate the necessary compatibilism between all rational beings' allegiance to the universal or cosmic rationale (the first *persona*), and their individual idiosyncratic character (the second *persona*) to which conditions of birth and circumstances relate (third and fourth *personae*) in which every human being is shown to play, by nature, four concurrent roles, or *personae*: (i) that of a human being, (ii) that of an individual with an individual personality, (iii) that of member of a community, and (iv) that of a harbourer of desires and ambitions. Thus Cic. *Off.* 1.107: 'duabus quasi nos a natura indutos esse personis; quarum una communis est ex eo, quod omnes participes sumus rationis [...] altera autem quae proprie singulis est tributa', 'we are invested by nature with something like two roles: one of these is common to all of us, arising from the fact that we all participate in reason [...] the other one has been assigned to each of us individually'. The four *personae* theory, rather than a set of ethical guidelines, is a theory which puts into perspective the place of man in the cosmos, and reframes thus the Stoic notion of a cosmic city as a *systema*, by anchoring the theory on the pivotal allegiance to reason through the first *persona*. See also LEVY 2003 esp. p.136ff., who makes the point for the logical foundation of the four *personae* theory by considering the four *personae* in terms of the ontological status of a constituent of the cosmos, by bringing out the parallel between the *personae* and the Stoic theory of the four categories (substrate, qualified, disposed, and disposed in relation to something).

off our survey by briefly examining the physical articulation of the *systema* and, moreover, how it supports and is supported by the Stoic theory of cosmic sympathy.

1.3.5. The *Systema* as Structure of the Cosmos: Unity and Cosmic Sympathy

The physical description of the cosmos runs parallel to the description of the cosmos as ‘a *systema* of gods and men, and of all that has been generated for them’, as we can see in the passage from Eusebius above, and in many other sources:¹²⁸ the cosmos is also said to be ‘a *systema* of sky and earth and the natural products within them’. D.L. attributes this description in particular to Posidonius; Stobaeus ascribes it, together with a series of other parallel descriptions, to Chrysippus. Whether it is Posidonius who provides the exact formula or not, however, it is clear from the succinct paragraph in D.L. that this is no innovation, but merely a further expression of the core Stoic account of the cosmos. It is the last two glosses which are the ones we are interested in here, and which are the most quoted in wide-ranging doxographies centred around the notion of a *systema*.

the cosmos is said to be that which is the individually qualified thing [constituted by] the substance of all there is or, as Posidonius says in his elementary work, the *Meteorology*, a *systema* constituted by the sky and the earth and all the naturally generated things found in them, or a *systema* of gods and human beings and the things which have been generated for their sakes.¹²⁹

The last formulae retain what is fundamental for the Stoics, namely that the cosmos, whether we consider it from the perspectives of the heavenly bodies that compose it (the physical structure), or the rational beings that people it (the ethical structure), is one unified thing. It is helpful here to have recourse to a distinction set out by Verity Harte, between a whole which *has* a structure and a whole which *is* a structure.¹³⁰ It is a distinction which rests, for the most part, on the status of the components which make up the whole.

The whole which *has* a structure is the whole whose components are the things they are, and are identified as such independently from the structure they also happen to be components of. There is no binding connection, in other words, between such components and the whole, though all the components together do, as in any delimited set, make up a whole. But neither

¹²⁸ Eusebius *PE* 15.15.3; D.L. 7.138; Stob. *Ecl.* 1.29.5.3; Epict. *Diss.* 1.9.4; Cleomedes *Cael.* 1.1.4.

¹²⁹ D.L. 7.138: ‘καὶ ἔστι κόσμος ὁ ἰδίως ποιὸς τῆς τῶν ὅλων οὐσίας ἢ, ὡς φησι Ποσειδώνιος ἐν τῇ Μετεωρολογικῇ στοιχειώσει, σύστημα ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς καὶ τῶν ἐν τούτοις φύσεων ἢ σύστημα ἐκ θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῶν ἕνεκα τούτων γεγονότων’.

¹³⁰ HARTE 2002 *esp.* p.158ff.

does the existence of the whole justify in any fundamental way the existence of the components, nor can the existence of the components be analysed in any fundamental way through their relation to the whole or its structure. Structure is irrelevant to the metaphysical status of the components.

Not so, for the whole which *is* a structure. On this schema, the existence and identity of the components is solely determined by their place within the structure they constitute. The components, to take up Harte's expression, are 'structure-laden'. The cohesion of the whole, which *is* its structure, is unbreakable because every component makes up the structure, and is thus crucial to it, just as the structure is fundamental to, and indeed generative of, the presence and identity of the components. It is this second model which fits the characterization of the Stoic *systema* as it frames the cosmos, the city, our knowledge-states, or the unit made up from the premisses and conclusion of an argument. It is not that the components are not separable, it is that they depend on the ordering principle which governs the structure. In this sense, all the components of a *systema* are structure-laden in virtue of belonging to the *systema*.

The Stoics explore this systematicity with the theory of cosmic sympathy. This is the theory according to which every component of the cosmos is influenced, directly or indirectly, by any alteration to any other component, through reactive chains spanning the breadth of the cosmos. Thus, the unity of the cosmos manifests itself by exhibiting cosmic sympathy (*sumpatheia*), in that every component 'sympathizes'.¹³¹ The examples in our sources are mostly of astral or meteorological reactions (the phases of the moon sympathizing with the tides, atmospheric changes sympathizing with movements of the stars). The theory is put forward as a further characterization of the kind of unity the cosmos constitutes. It is not a unity as an army constitutes a unity, composed as it is from a series of associated parts which exist separately in themselves, i.e. apart from the unit they form. Nor is the cosmos a unity in virtue of being the product of an assemblage of disparate parts, which combine to make something different from what they are separately, as wires and tubes make up a car. The unity of the cosmos is an organic unity, thus formed neither of disparate parts, nor of parts existing separately in themselves.¹³² It is a unity verified through the chain of sympathetic reactions manifested through and through the cosmos, as the whole alters with every alteration of its components, just as 'when you cut your finger, the effect is distributed and felt throughout the whole body'.¹³³

¹³¹ S.E. M. 9.79–85.

¹³² S.E. M. 9.78–9; Plut. *Con. Prae.* 142F. The cosmos is thus a living being: D.L. 7.139: 'τὸν ὅλον κόσμον ζῶν ὄντα'.

¹³³ S.E. M. 9.80. The influence of all things on everything else in the cosmos will also, it follows, express itself in the behaviour and nature of individual components: Chrysippus draws on his theory of cosmic sympathy to bolster the claim about the determination, through

That the theory of sympathy should be discussed in contexts in which a specific understanding of unity is being worked out is revealing of how the Stoics think of sympathy and organic unity. For sympathy, in these contexts, manifestly belongs to an account of causation by which a movement of one component has a direct effect on another, though seemingly the affected part is neither in close proximity nor in direct contact with the cause. And yet the relation is causal, and specifically framed in terms of an efficient causation whereby the movement of one thing is the sole and sufficient cause for the alteration of something else, just as the high and low of the tide is directly (i.e. solely and sufficiently) caused by the waning and waxing of the moon. Grounded in the notion (and morphology) of 'sympathy' is the notion of passivity. And there is, certainly for the Stoics, no passivity without an efficient cause (see 3.1.3 below). At the same time, the strong sense of organic unity implies that no component of the whole is separable from the whole. It is neither something independent of the whole, nor indeed is it ever physically separate from the whole. But if, in addition, we are to factor in sympathy as the manifestation of efficient causation, then it follows that there is, despite appearances, contiguous and continuous contact between the components of the cosmos such as to enable the causal relation to come about.

It is not surprising, accordingly, that the discussion of the organic unity of the cosmos also involves the discussion of the absence of void within the cosmos:

the cosmos has no void in it, but is completely unified.¹³⁴

The passive perfect form '*hēnōsthai*' ('to be completely unified', 'to be one'), which in other texts is also found in the substantivized form of the perfect participle, referring to the cosmos as a completely unified thing (*hēnōmenon*, S.E. M. 9.80), indicates, in this Stoic usage, not only wholeness but a void-tight compactness. Sympathy again plays an explanatory role for this important tenet of Stoic cosmology. For the Stoics then add that:

this is necessarily so, in view of the sympathy (*sumpnoia*, literally: the breathing together) and unified tension (*suntonia*) binding the celestial elements with the terrestrial.¹³⁵

antecedent causes, of the different characters or 'natures' of people ('in naturis hominum dissimiludines' Cic. *Fat.* 8), as each person is subject to different sequences of causal influences whose origins are the cosmic interrelations bound through cosmic sympathy; see further BOBZIEN 2005 pp.294–5.

¹³⁴ D.L. 7.140: 'ἐν δὲ τῷ κόσμῳ μηδὲν εἶναι κενόν, ἀλλ' ἡγνώσθαι αὐτόν'.

¹³⁵ D.L. 7.140: 'τοῦτο γὰρ ἀναγκάζειν τὴν τῶν οὐρανίων πρὸς τὰ ἐπίγεια σύμπνοιαν καὶ συντονίαν'.

Because there is cosmic sympathy, which is described through synonymous terms, *sumpnoia* and *suntonia*, there can be no void between any participant of the sympathy relation. Therefore, there is no void inside the cosmos. No void means that everything is, in effect, contiguous with something else.¹³⁶

The theory of sympathy relies on the assumption that for there to be a pervasive causal influence in the cosmos, there needs to be a cause. The cause is not the cause of cosmic sympathy, but the cause of the kind of unity, the kind of *hēnōmenon*, continuously contiguous through and through, which itself underlies the manifestations of sympathy. There is thus a cohesive principle, whose role it is to hold this unified, compact thing together. Every unity, for the Stoics, depends on a cohesive principle, which is what distinguishes constructs such as armies, or cars, from the organic unity of, say, a body, or a stone, or in this case, the cosmos.¹³⁷ It is *pneuma* in the case of the cosmos, because *pneuma* is the cohesive principle, which is rational through and through.¹³⁸ The parallel terms for sympathetic reactions we find in the last quoted passage from D.L., namely '*sumpnoia*', literally 'breathing together' (with the morphological doublet of *pneuma*, '*pnoē*' at the root of the compound), and '*suntonia*', a unified tension, refer descriptively to this cohesive principle, holding everything together into a compact unity.

Cosmic sympathy, with what it implies about the compact unity of the cosmos and the void surrounding it, gives the physical padding to the *systema*. The cohesive principle, the *pneuma* is the physical characterization of what is logically set out in terms of the rationale, the *logos*, which orders the *systema*.

Chrysippus says that what fate is essentially is a pneumatic force, which administers the whole, by structuring it.¹³⁹

The whole (*to pan*) here refers to the whole structure of reality, the cosmos and the surrounding void, in which everything has its designated place, including void, which, in subsisting externally to the cosmos, fulfils its role as 'empty but ready to receive it' (D.L. 7.140) when the cosmos dissolves at

¹³⁶ Thus Marcus Aurelius (6.38), emphasizes the continuity from one object to the next: 'καὶ γὰρ ἄλλω <ἄλλο> ἐξῆς ἐστὶ ταῦτα διὰ τὴν τοικυὴν κίνησιν καὶ σύμπνοιαν καὶ τὴν ἔνωσιν τῆς οὐσίας', 'one thing is continuous with another because of the tension, the sympathy (breathing together) and the unity of being'

¹³⁷ Simplicius in *Cat.* 214.24–35: a cohesive principle is more than for a thing to be qualified, as an army or a car can be (namely as being arranged so as to be an army, or a car). The Stoics talk of a *hexis*, i.e. a tenor, which holds together a stone, and which is called a *phusis*, nature, in the case of a living being such as a plant; in the case of a living rational being, such as a human being, or the cosmos, the cohesive principle is called *pneuma* and soul. See D.L. 7.139, 148, 158; S. E. M. 9.81; Galen *PHP* 6.3.8.1–2. Cf. LONG 1982 pp.38–9; MEIJER 2007 p.87.

¹³⁸ Cic. *DN* 2.19; S.E. M. 9.82–5; D.L. 7.139; Plut. *Com. Not.* 1085C; D.L. 7.158. See MEIJER 2007 pp.85–6.

¹³⁹ Stob. *Ecl.* 1.5.15.21–2: 'Χρύσιππος δύναμιν πνευματικὴν τὴν οὐσίαν τῆς εἰμαρμένης, τάξει τοῦ παντός διοικητικὴν.'

the conflagration.¹⁴⁰ The rationale which governs this arrangement thus governs the body, which is the cosmos, and the relation there is between the cosmos and the void. It is the same rationale which articulates and maintains the internal organization of the cosmos. The *systema* must also account for the complex nature of these interrelations. This complexity rests on the relation of things with states-of-affairs relative to things, which is framed by causation. Thus the sympathetic reactions in the cosmos are manifestations of this complex causal network in which the states-of-affairs, which the Stoics call *lekta*, are part and parcel of the compact *hēnōmenon*, the unified whole.

1.3.6. The *Systema* and the Parts of Philosophy

What is the Stoic *systema*? It is not itself the cosmos, nor the combination of the cosmos and the void. It is not a body, nor an incorporeal. It is not, in other words, itself a thing which has its own status in reality. It is the structure which not only holds together each and every component of reality but accounts for the very reality of each and every component. That is to say, it is what is set out by the components and their internal organization and therefore is referred to in terms of the components. The *systema* is thus set out by what we called above, following Harte, structure-laden components, which are constitutive of the *systema* and also utterly depend on the order assigned to them by the *systema*. This double role is what gives them an ontological status. It follows that talk of the partitioning of the *systema*, or the Stoic *systema* as a systematic account of the three parts of philosophy, does not take the measure of the complexity of the Stoic *systema*, to say the least. For what the Stoic notion of a *systema* shows is that a division into parts of its constitutive components does not exhaust the *systema*.

The *systema* is not divisible into parts as the *hēnōmenon* is which corresponds to the cosmos. Logic, ethics, and physics are not separable in that way, though, as we have seen, the *systema* can be articulated in terms of an ethical structure, a physical structure, or a logical structure. So, if ‘partitioning’ is at all the appropriate term here (there are evident signs of a discussion amongst the Stoics about this, though in most texts they seem to have settled

¹⁴⁰ The whole, *to pan*, is the cosmos and the void outside it, distinguished from *to holon* which is limited to the cosmos: S.E. *M.* 9.332; Stob. *Ecl.* 1.21.3b.3–5; Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1073E; D.L. 7.143, where the distinction however is put down to two distinct uses of *to pan*, either as just the cosmos, or as the cosmos and the void, in which case *to pan* is said to correspond to ‘the *systema* made up of the cosmos and the void’; the name of Apollodorus is specifically attached to this formulation, whereas all other, relatively profuse testimonies about the distinction refer to the Stoics in general.

on ‘*merē*’ (parts) as the standard term, cf. 1.1.8 above), the partitioning of the *systema* is of a different sort—a sort which relies firstly on all of the components of the *systema* being united through a specific relation, governed by the *systema*. There are no rival or parallel structures, but one and the same which can be approached from different perspectives—all of which eventually recompose the *systema* in all its complexity. The partitioning of the *systema* is thus conceivable only by taking into account different perspectives or articulations of one and the same relation, i.e. the governance of one and the same rationale over the whole of reality.

The physical perspective provides us with the physical padding of what the whole of reality consists in (as we shall see, this concerns the relation of things with *lekta* through causation). The ethical perspective provides us with the goal or the good for the *systema*; this can be discerned through an examination of what the components are directed towards, namely the realization of certain states-of-affairs, or *lekta*. From there follows a hierarchy of values, which are ultimately conducive to physical structure and logical structure (in terms of what causes what, and what is the ontological status of things). The logical perspective starts with the ontological status of the components of reality and what relations there can be between them, accounting thus, for example, for what is possible for a human being to know, to say, but also to desire. The reliance on the ethical and physical articulation of the components of the *systema* is pervasive.

These different perspectives are not in any way separate or separable aspects, or parts, of the *systema* but entry paths to the *systema*, which collapse into one another. The Stoic *systema* is the governing principle, reason, together with the unfolding of its regimenting activity, which consists in upholding the terms of the interrelations between the logical, physical, and ethical structures. For instance, it is crucial to distinguish the ontological status of any constituent of the cosmos from its role in a causal relation; but it will turn out that everything has a role in a causal relation, which accounts for what and how things happen in the world. One way of talking about this, generally, is by referring to cosmic sympathy; but we shall see that the way bodies are envisaged by the Stoics establishes each and every body (including tenor, soul, and qualities) as constantly implicated in a causal relation as a matter of their very existence.

Whether or not it is Posidonius who formulaically adds the physical description of the cosmos as a ‘*systema* of sky and earth and all natural beings contained by them’, it is he, in any case, who is recorded as adamantly defensive of all that the notion of the *systema* implies. For Posidonius is especially concerned with the significance of the *systema*, we learn, not from further use of the term in the Posidonian corpus, but from Posidonius’ contribution to the discussion of the parts of philosophy and their relation to one another.

As we established above, the analogies of the egg, the living being, and the garden¹⁴¹ are intended to show how three distinct and distinguishable parts are actually interrelated in such a way that not only do they make up a unity, but also that each part is the part it is in virtue of its relation to the others. Posidonius questions the last analogy on the list, that of the garden whose encircling fence stands for logic, the earth and plants for physics, and the fruit for ethics (S.E. M. 7.19). The reason is that it does not convey well enough the cohesive nature of the parts. Posidonius' concern is for the analogies to explicate what underlies the claim that the parts of philosophy are 'inseparable' ('ἀχώριστα'). But 'because plants appear different from fruit and the fence is separated from the plants', the garden analogy misfires, since the only feature it is supposed to relay, namely inseparability, is misrepresented.

It has been suggested in the literature that the garden analogy is not of pure Stoic pedigree.¹⁴² But clearly some Stoics did refer to it, and the analogy became part of the set analogies, which is why Posidonius disapproves of it. That S.E. takes the trouble to report this rather marginal and seemingly hair-splitting remark from Posidonius in the first place is the surface evidence of a much deeper concern Posidonius has with precisely what we now recognize to be the implications of the Stoic notion of systematicity, rather than the methodological repercussions of implementing tripartition in the study of philosophy. Posidonius is the Stoic philosopher whom we find time and time again demarcating himself from the previous Stoics. But we can see here that this is not so much in disagreement with them, but because of an uncompromising orthodoxy, which has, paradoxically, earned him the reputation of heterodoxy.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ D.L. 7.40; S.E. M. 7.17–19; Philo *Mut. Nom.* 74–6.

¹⁴² IERODIAKONOU 1993 p.72 suggests this on account of Philo's (from *Mut. Nom.* 74–6) attributing the garden analogy to 'some ancients' in general, with no reference to the Stoics, along with a passage from Origen (*in Matth.* 17.7214–25) also evoking the garden analogy with no apparent connection to the Stoics (in Origen, the analogy is spun further with a parallel drawn with levels of meaning contained in the Scriptures: the literal sense is analogical to logic and the garden fence, which is guarding the Holy Scriptures from outsiders, and the divine or highest teaching is akin to physics). It is noteworthy that both these texts are commentaries on the Bible (Old and New Testaments), in which garden analogies abound; it might be for this reason that the analogy appeals to these authors in particular, who chose to single it out when referring to the, by then, tradition of the tripartite division of philosophy by the 'ancient philosophers'. Of course, Posidonius antedates Philo by some hundred years or so, and the analogy had already entered into the canon by his time. The analogy certainly does stand out for its flimsiness compared to the other two; there are also greater divergences about the hierarchy of the parts and the order of their presentation than for the other two.

¹⁴³ This reputation seems especially to have been forged by Galen, e.g. in *PHP* 4.4.38, 5.1.5, 5.1.10, 8.1.14 where Posidonius is called 'the most scientific (*epistēmōnikōtatos*) of the Stoics'. He is famously called the most 'Aristotelizing' of the Stoics by Strabo (2.3.8.24), but again he is there merely upholding, uncompromisingly, the Chrysippean tenet that everything has a cause but that humans are limited as to discerning them (as recorded by Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1045C; *Simpl. in Phys.* 333.2–5). See KIDD 1988 *esp.* the commentary on his frag. T73 (= *Simpl. in Phys.*

1.3.7. The *Systēma* and *Lekta*

We have discussed at length the tripartitioning of philosophy. What is distinctly original in the Stoic approach is what the Stoics understand by tripartitioning, namely that the most important aspect of tripartitioning is not so much the stipulation of the fields of inquiry as the calibration of the relations between the parts. Tripartitioning is thus a tool to lay out the connective web of what is a far more grounding notion for the Stoics, namely the *systēma*. The question of tripartition for the Platonists or the Peripatetics, or even for an anti-establishment school like the Cyrenaics and its presumed resistance to comply with the tripartite formula (according to S.E., cf. 1.2.1 above) is fundamentally a question concerning the nature of philosophy, what it is: a practice, a discourse, a method. For the Stoics, tripartition is merely a means to set up the outposts for the *systēma*, the complex structure of the whole of reality. The discovery and analysis of the *systēma* (according to which are configured, at the macro level the cosmos and at the micro level our own cognitive states and relation to the cosmos) supplants, for the Stoics, the by now institutionalized question concerning the nature of philosophy.

Is philosophy then, for the Stoics, nothing more than the *systēma*, or coincidental with it? A system is a system is a system. That is to say, the *systēma* is a self-contained notion. The whole of reality, of which it is the structure, is not moved either way, with or without philosophy. That is to say, philosophy is not an extra thing, in addition to what there is. Philosophy should not be anything other, therefore, than a mapping out of the *systēma*. The *systēma* is thus a Stoic discovery, in two ways: firstly, in that the Stoics show that what there is, is a structured interconnected whole; and secondly, that the role of the philosopher is nothing over and above the mapping out of this structure, by identifying the terms of the interrelation between the constituents of reality. To this end alone, we shall be referring to parts of the *systēma*, because every constituent of the *systēma* is in effect a constitutive part of it.

Broaching such an analysis through an investigation of the role and nature of *lekta* is no exception to the enjoinder. For it is impossible to confine *lekta* to one context of discussion. They are present in the physical analysis when it comes to accounting for causation, as we shall see in great detail in chapter 7; but their presence there grounds and is grounded by their role in logic. For they have ontological independence, and constitute what is true or false (chapter 6). This status itself sets out the grounding for their role in language:

292.29–31), and on his frag. T85 (= Strabo 2.3.8.24). Recent scholarship has greatly contributed to attenuate the critique of heterodoxy addressed to Posidonius: see BRUNTSCHWIG 1988, REYDAMS-SCHILS 1999 p.88ff., BETEGH 2003, drawing Posidonius closer, if not back into, the fold of orthodoxy and distancing him from the more marked heterodoxy of his teacher, Panaetius (whose own heterodoxy has been put in doubt, see PROST 2001).

they are there to be said, but need not ever get said to be there in any case (chapters 4, 5, 8). The involvement of *lekta* in what is true or false also makes a discussion of them inseparable from questions of epistemology, the nature of thoughts, and ethics. *Lekta* are not polyvalent in the Stoic analysis of reality, as if the Stoics pulled *lekta* out of a mysterious and malleable hat whenever they needed help resolving difficult questions. They have been accused of doing so from antiquity to the modern day. In all the contexts just evoked, *lekta* stand as one and the same kind of thing with properties which both condition and are conditioned by what reality is like, i.e. the system of complex interrelations we have described.

Philosophy is thus not the system itself, but the discovery and revelation of it through an analysis, which enters into the system by one of the entry paths. It is undertaken by someone endeavouring to ‘philosophize’, i.e. grasp the workings of the system. Hence the Stoics talk of a transmission (*paradosis*) of what we may call their doctrine which has an order, insofar as entering into the analysis of the *systema* can only, humanly, be done gradually from one entry path.

Lekta are incorporeal, and for this reason critics of the Stoics have considered them both as non-existent in the *hēnōmenon*, the compact cosmos the Stoics describe, and as artificial, i.e. a product of artifice, of logical invention wielded to carry out a discursive activity called philosophy. Thus Plutarch berates the Stoics for having introduced ‘into life and philosophy’ these incorporeal *lekta*, which, it is implied, cannot possibly have a place in either, given that they are non-existent and a product of artifice:

For these, they say, are not beings, but still things, of which they continue to make use in life and when philosophizing, as subsisting and obtaining.¹⁴⁴

Plutarch is here referring to all the incorporeals the Stoics claim are present in reality—we have already encountered the void as that which, in combination with the cosmos, makes up the whole of reality; there is also time and space to account for, in addition to *lekta*. We find here the reference to two Stoic terms for referring to the ontological status of the incorporeals: subsisting and obtaining. We shall see in the following chapters that the shared status of all four incorporeals is crucial for the configuration of the *systema*. There is, in fact, no *systema* without the incorporeals, since the incorporeals are co-constitutive of reality, alongside the corporeals. In an important strand of scholarship, *lekta* have been considered to stand out from the other incorporeals, because their role is confined to language and they are not present in cosmology. The following chapters will be a step-by-step demonstration that this is a misrepresentation of *lekta*. Not only are they present and

¹⁴⁴ Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1116B–C: ‘ταῦτα γὰρ ὄντα μὲν μὴ εἶναι τινὰ δ’ εἶναι λέγουσι, χρώμενοι δ’ αὐτοῖς ὡς ὑφρεστώσι καὶ ὑπάρχουσιν ἐν τῷ βίῳ καὶ τῷ φιλοσοφεῖν διατελοῦσιν’.

co-constitutive of reality, but they are the keystone of the *systema*. For they are solicited at the very heart of what makes a *systema*: namely, the interrelation of states-of-affairs and things.

Plutarch speaks of 'life and philosophy' as if the Stoics and he are thinking about these in the same way. Plutarch firstly assumes that the Stoics acknowledge a distinction between something like life, or living one's life, and a different kind of activity, doing philosophy, or philosophizing. He secondly implies that the Stoics are wrong to have the incorporeals figure in both. The deeper implication (on Plutarch's reading) is that in life (i.e. everyday life), we are not aware that we have recourse to incorporeals, though we do—just as Monsieur Jourdain, in Molière's *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, is not aware that he has been speaking in prose all his life until his philosophy tutor reveals this to him.¹⁴⁵ In philosophizing (for the Stoics, according to Plutarch) we become aware of the incorporeals; but instead of re-incorporating them into existence, we establish modes of reality for them which are additional to existence (namely subsisting and obtaining) in order to accommodate them, and persist in relying on what are now officially acknowledged as non-existent things to explain deep philosophical problems. For Plutarch, consistency and intellectual honesty should have forced the Stoics to say that since there are such things as *lekta*, time, place, and void, which we come to be aware of through our philosophizing, we cannot solve the question of what their ontological status is by relegating them to a non-existent status.

Part of the difficulty Plutarch has in comprehending the Stoic position lies in his assumption that there is something like living one's life, and something else which is philosophizing. But we have seen that for the Stoics this is a distinction which simply does not capture any of their concerns. Not because they expressly do not distinguish between life and philosophy, so as to say that life is philosophy, or that philosophy is a way of life (interpretative attempts, which have been challenged in previous pages); but rather because there is no such thing as living a life of unreason. It is not that, thanks to the philosopher, we suddenly realize we have been saying *lekta* all this time without realizing it. The philosophical analysis does not reveal anything. It is solely concerned with the *systema*, and mapping out its articulations. As for everyday life, or living one's life, as we have seen, this consists, for the Stoics, in reasoning, i.e. grasping the order of things governed as they are by reason. That almost all of us fail to do so does not mean we ever stop, because it is simply impossible for us not to go on.

¹⁴⁵ Molière, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, Act II, sc.4.

Lekta in the Stoic Ontological Framework

Lekta belong to what the Stoics call dialectic, which itself is a part of the logical structure of the *systema*, that is, the structure of reality. *Lekta* are thus bound into the framework of Stoic ontology. As a part of dialectic, the *lekta* are placed within a constellation of items which both highlights the vicinity of *lekta* with these other elements of dialectic and also brings out their distinctiveness. It is their distinction from mental events, such as impressions in the mind, which is the first battleground for the Stoics. The Stoics distinguish *lekta* from impressions, but say that both are kinds of signified things. The analysis must thus take into consideration the distinction between things signified and things signifying, and in the space provided by such a distinction—the first of its kind in ancient philosophy—grasp what is at stake in detaching *lekta* from impressions. Against the complexity of these relations, we shall end up defending the mind-independence of *lekta*, in contrast to impressions.

2.1. THE MAP OF THE LOGICAL STRUCTURE

2.1.1. *Logos*-reason and *Logos*-speech

Philosophical analysis for the Stoics consists in mapping out the *systema*, governed, as it is, by reason. This is the ‘matter’ (*hulē*), as Epictetus puts it, with which the philosopher is concerned:

What then is the matter (*hulē*) for the philosopher? [...] It is what Zeno says, namely to understand the elements of reason, what each of them is like, and how they are fitted one to another and all that follows from them.¹

¹ Epict. *Diss.* 4.8.12: ‘*τίς οὖν ὕλη τοῦ φιλοσόφου; [...] ἃ Ζήνων λέγει, γινῶναι τὰ τοῦ λόγου στοιχεῖα, ποῖόν τι ἕκαστον αὐτῶν ἐστὶ καὶ πῶς ἀρμόττεται πρὸς ἄλληλα καὶ ὅσα τούτοις ἀκόλουθά ἐστιν*’.

The task of the philosopher is thus to produce an account showing the articulation of the order and arrangement of the way things are. Philosophical analysis, in other words, is not something in addition to that order. In part, as we have seen especially with Hadot's distinction between teaching and practice, the point here turns on the role of language: for in producing an account of reality, which necessarily is expressed through language, does not the account itself constitute something distinct and additional to the structure it is intended to describe? Hadot answers this question in the positive, separating teaching from practice. But we have seen that there are problems with such a clear-cut separation, which does not seem evident from the texts. Epictetus here shines a light on those problems by focusing on a general but deep-rooted notion in Stoicism, namely the notion of *logos*.

The Stoics programmatically and explicitly embrace the multi-faceted notion of *logos*: it is the supreme rationality of all there is, and as such it is both a rational principle, also designated as 'intellect' ('*nous*'), and a dynamic creative force, and as such is manifest as the 'rational seed of the cosmos' ('*spermatikon logon tou kosmou*').² But it is also meaningful speech (D.L. 7.57); moreover, the term '*logos*' designates an argument or syllogism (a *logos*, remember, is a *systema* of premisses and a conclusion, cf. 1.3.1). With such a wide appraisal of the application of the word '*logos*', the Stoics are not merely expatiating on a linguistic fact about the many uses in Greek of '*logos*'—a fact which is artlessly summarized in a note in Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies*: 'but *logos*, for the Greeks, signifies both speech and reason'.³ Nor are the Stoics channelling a philosophical tradition which had been broached already by, for instance, Heraclitus, who famously speaks of *logos* as that which is common to all. For Heraclitus, *logos* explains how all things are, though most people are incapable of grasping it, because, 'like barbarians who do not understand the language', they are incapable of understanding the language of nature, or the way things are.⁴ Heraclitus, as has been shown in the literature, is not unifying a use of the term '*logos*', nor do the Stoics build on an Heraclitean basis, but rather on a notion of rationality which is not present there.⁵ The direction the Stoics take is a commitment to there being something deeply structural about the workings of reason-*logos*, which not so much unifies the seemingly different applications of *logos* in different fields, but rather levels out all these other applications. The different applications are required by different contexts to establish, systematically, one and the same rationale. When it comes to creating the world, the *logos* activates itself to let the rational seeds

² See in D.L. 7.135–6, with 7.138. *Logos*, *nous*, are different guises of the active principle of the cosmos.

³ Isid. *Etym.* 22.24.7: '*logos* enim apud Graecos et sermonem significat et rationem'.

⁴ See S.E. *M.* 7.126 and 132–3; Stob. *Ecl.* 1.5.15.5–6.

⁵ See LONG 1996c, arguing against the tradition, in the literature, of comparing the Stoics with Heraclitus.

unfold and set out the structure of the cosmos; when it comes to rational beings expressing themselves, their languages are the direct unfolding, i.e. reflections, of this structure. That the Stoics are committed to a view along these lines is indicated, in the first instance, by the direct connection Epictetus and Chrysippus rely on between *logos*-speech and *logos*-reason.

Epictetus in our passage appears to fold the question of reason-*logos* into a question of language. He says that the means to attain 'right reason' ('*orthos logos*') consist in knowledge of the 'elements of speech' ('*logou stoiceia*'). The latter expression, '*logou stoiceia*', is a category-header which, following Galen, is actually introduced by Chrysippus.⁶ It is in any case an expression which is firmly established by Epictetus' time to refer, generally, to the parts of speech, which cover nouns, verbs, articles, and conjunctions (with variations and additions to the list from one source to another).⁷ When Galen, Alexander, or the early Grammarians use this expression, either in critical reference to Chrysippus as its originator or straightforwardly to discuss the constituents of speech, it is in effect in the context, broadly speaking, of grammatical concerns, or at least of what we would recognize as grammatical concerns. But this cannot be the case with Epictetus here, who is speaking about the characterization of the true philosopher as the person concerned with acquiring right reason (*orthos logos*), which is the key to acting well. It appears puzzling that the means to *orthos logos* is through knowledge of the *stoiceia logou* where '*logos*' does not seem to be used in the same way in both expressions. Reason-*logos* collapses into speech-*logos* without any explanation as to how the correspondence is effected.

Epictetus is either playing on the double usage of the word '*logos*' as both reason and speech, or he is not taking the expression '*stoiceia logou*' to designate the elements of speech. Now, it would be strange, to say the least, and probably too cryptic to be plausible, if Epictetus were not using '*stoiceia logou*' in its (by his time) common acceptance as a grammatical category-header for the parts of speech. What is more, it is very unlikely that Epictetus would be flippantly, and surreptitiously, gliding from one usage of *logos* to another, as if homonymy were a sufficient justification for doing so. For here, in this chapter entitled 'To those who hastily assume the guise of the

⁶ Galen PHP 8.3.13: 'τό τ' ὄνομα καὶ τὸ ῥῆμα καὶ τὴν πρόθεσιν ἄρθρον τε καὶ σύνδεσμον ἂ πάλιν ὁ Χρυσίππος ὀνομάζει τοῦ λόγου στοιχεῖα', 'the name, the verb, the preposition, the article, the conjunction, which, a long time ago, Chrysippus called the elements of speech'.

⁷ See D.L. 7.56–7 speaking of 'λέξεως στοιχεῖα' and 'τοῦ λογοῦ μέρη'; Galen PHP 8.3.13 (cf. previous n.6); Alex. in Met. 355.15ff. referring to the Stoics. Apollonius Dyscolus makes an explicit aside (Synt. 4.449.1–3) to state that 'we have been speaking of "τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ λόγου" in the same sense of "τὰ στοιχεῖα τῆς λέξεως"'. Ammonius in de Int. 64.26 refers without further explanation to Aristotle's analysis of names, verbs, and conjunctions as the 'στοιχεῖα τοῦ λόγου' in Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*, though it is certainly not Aristotle who uses this terminology; but Ammonius has recourse to a common category-header by his time. On the parts of speech for the Stoics see 9.1.2 and 9.1.3 below.

philosopher' (*Diss.* 4.8), Epictetus is, if anything, more earnest than ever in defence of philosophy and what it takes to be a true philosopher. For he is arguing against people who think, as he says, 'that it is enough to have long hair and a dirty coat to be a philosopher'. At such a crucial exhortative moment, it is reasonable to assume that Epictetus is saying something both serious and authoritative. The compactness of the formula also suggests it is a reminder of fundamentals, which tap into rooted, well-trodden doctrine, rather than an argument crafted for the circumstances, or comprehensible only to the initiated.

In the literature, attempts have been made to smooth out the apparently puzzling move from *logos*-reason to *logos*-speech by supplementing presumed gaps in an overly laconic phrasing. Thus Anthony Long first translates '*stoicheia logou*' as 'elements of discourse' in an attempt to shift the discussion closer to a discussion of reason and rationality. Long then interprets Epictetus as referring to 'the need [for students of philosophy] to analyse the thoughts and the implications of their language'.⁸ But this reading at best risks over-interpreting Epictetus, and is at worst misleading. For a great deal of explanation would be required to show how—or even if—our thoughts have a language, which, moreover, is said here to have 'implications'. It is thus a solution which betrays an established use of the expression 'elements of speech' and loads a controversial, highly compact, not to say mysterious, view onto what is meant to be basic and foundational. Epictetus himself, moreover, is nowhere else in our extant sources concerned with the possibility of a linguistic content of our thoughts. Though, as we shall see in due course, the content of thoughts are *lekta* which have a connection to language (one of the aims of this book is to elucidate the terms of that connection), it is hard to foist such a piece of complex theory onto Epictetus' '*stoicheia logou*'; nor is it clear that this is what Long has in mind here, since he leaves things at a very general level.

But there is no need for speculations of this kind in the first place, for we have a crucial text which enables us to trace Epictetus' move from *logos*-reason to *logos*-speech at least as far back in orthodoxy as Chrysippus—though Epictetus claims this comes from Zeno. Be that as it may, in a relatively readable fragment from the *Logical Investigations* (mentioned in 1.1.7 above) Chrysippus explains that the concern of philosophy for right reason (*orthos logos*) can be properly fostered thanks to expertise in the knowledge of the parts of speech and their combinations:

philosophy, whether it is the care for, or the knowledge of, right reason, is the discipline concerned with reason (*logos*). For if we are completely familiar with the parts of speech (*moriōn logou*) and their syntax, we will make use of it

⁸ LONG 2002 p.120.

[i.e. *logos*] in an expert way. By *logos* I mean that which by nature belongs to all rational beings.⁹

Knowing the parts of speech is more than relevant to acquiring right reason—for Chrysippus it is the means to do so. Thus knowledge of the parts of speech-*logos* is somehow supposed to reveal or at least grant access to reason-*logos*. The greater the knowledge of the parts of speech, the closer, presumably, one will get to right reason, *orthos logos*.¹⁰ It is far from clear in these lines from Chrysippus in what way *logos*-speech is bound to *logos*-reason. But neither Chrysippus nor Epictetus seem to think this needs more clarification. In both accounts there is an order of progress: knowledge of the parts of speech leads to acquiring reason. It must be, therefore, that both rely on a grounding understanding of *logos* in its double usage: that *logos*-speech and *logos*-reason are related in a deep, structural way. This is the purport of the last explanative clause: there is only one understanding of *logos*. Given the suggested order of progress, the relation is set up in terms of *logos*-speech underscoring in some way *logos*-reason. That is to say that Chrysippus—but presumably Zeno already, as Epictetus claims—considers that an analysis of the internal organization of speech holds the key to the workings of reason. Thus linguistic structure is in some way subordinate and complementary (in its reflection of it) to the overall structure of reality, which, governed as it is by reason (*logos*), constitutes the corresponding expression of reason. This is not surprising given how the Stoics, as we saw in 1.3 above, consider the structures of syllogisms, the epistemic states corresponding to truth and knowledge, the unity of an art (and not the least the art of life) as a *systema*. They are systematic precisely because they are structured in accordance with the structure of reality. It is thus fitting to speak of the *systema* at a micro level and at a macro level. In a similar way, we can talk here of the *logos* at the level of language, and the *logos* at the level of the whole of reality where language, limited to only those constituents of reality that have access to reason, reflects the *logos* which holds the whole together.

⁹ The translation is from FREDE 1987b p.327 of the following lines as they are printed in SVF ii.131, p.41,27–32 (= PHerc. 1020): '(ἡ) φιλοσοφία, εἵτε ἐ(πι)τῇ δέου(σι)ς λόγου ὁρ(θό)τῃτ(ος) (εἴτ') ἐπιστήμη(η), ἢ (αὐτῇ τῇ) περὶ λόγον | π(ραγμ)ατεῖαν· κ(αὶ γὰρ) | ἐν(τὸ)ς ὄντες τῶν (τοῦ) | λόγου μορίων καὶ τῆς | (συ)ντάξεως αὐτῶν χρ(η)| (σ)όμ(ε)θα ἐμπ(ε)ί(ρως αὐ)|τῶ· λό(γ)ον δὲ (λέ)γω τὸν | κα(τὰ φύσιν) π(ᾶσ)ι (τοῖς) | λογικοῖς ὑπάρχοντα'.

¹⁰ FREDE 1987b p.326ff. develops the Stoic view, against the Peripatetics, that the elements of speech (*logos*), have a correspondence with the internal constitution of a *lekton*; for this reason, they are not subject to variations in expression but are revelatory of ontological structure. On this see more at 9.1.3 below. For now, the important point is the direction of the debate with the Peripatetics: parts of speech for the Stoics point to questions of ontological structure, and not tools for expression as on the rival account. See also BRUNSCHWIG 1995a p.116f. on how the Stoics list the elements of speech to better reveal the elements which make up *logos*-reason.

2.1.1.1. *There is no Specific Question of Language*

The Chrysippean injunction consists thus in taking as an entry path to the *systema*, the analysis of the parts of speech, to charter the relation of the parts of speech to reality, and thus grasp the structure of reality. For the Stoics, language is from the start considered to be a question internal to ontology, which inserts itself into the structure of reality. It is not an external whose place and role needs to be accommodated within ontology and tamed to metaphysical truth, but which constantly evades the limits in which it should ideally be contained. The Stoics anchor the question of language deep within the *systema* formed by the interrelations and interdependencies that are constitutive of reality as a whole. As such, as we may expect given that the *systema*, as described in the previous chapter, is constituted by the integration of the logical structure into the physical and into the ethical, the different elements connected with language are spread throughout the *systema*. There is thus no one part of the *systema* which deals specifically with language, nor can the philosophical analysis avoid including a wide array of topics of discussion, from logic, physics, and ethics, in order eventually to piece together an account of language. It follows that, for one, there is no theory of language as such for the Stoics. But also, secondly, the account of language which ultimately emerges from an analysis, extended over a diverse span of questions (e.g. the production of voice which is a question of physics, and the role and nature of *lekta* which are the concern of logic, physics, and ontology), brings out the dependence of language first and foremost on aspects of the ontological or logical structure. For these questions (i.e. the formation of sound, the ontological status of *lekta*) are not framed in terms of language or language production.

Lekta are a case in point: they can be expressed through the utterance of a certain kind of sound. They are indeed indispensable for the production of meaningful language, given that they are the content of expressions. They are, as the commonest translation of the Greek term has it, 'sayable', that is to say, they can be said. But their role in language is not fundamental because, simply on the basis of the modality in the very term '*lekton*', or 'sayable', it is clear that they are not necessarily said, and do not need to be said, to be the kind of thing they are. A *lekton* can be said, but can also not be said. It follows that the kind of thing a *lekton* is, is distinct, or, at the very least, distinguishable from its role in language. For a *lekton* might never be said at all, and yet remain the *lekton* it is, unperturbed.

These matters will be developed in the following pages and chapters, suffice it here to state that the question of language for the Stoics depends on theories which belong to different parts of the philosophical analysis, across the board of the *systema*, the connective system of reality. The *systema* is grounded on two principles: that (i) no part of the *systema* is unrelated to another (however

indirectly) and that (ii) it is the interrelation of the parts which both determines the role of a given constituent within the system and at the same time distinguishes the given element from its role, given that a constituent's role depends on the kind of thing the constituent is. The philosophical analysis characterizes the constituent element as the particular thing it is, setting out what each thing is capable, or incapable, of doing. It thus traces back the link between the thing and the role it fulfils in the *systema*. For instance, the void is characterized as an incorporeal (*asōmatos*) and infinite, which is what enables the cosmos to deliquesce into it at the time of the conflagration (D.L. 7.140, 142).

It is within the logical structure of the *systema* that these characteristics are charted, e.g. as an incorporeal, in the case of the void, which is capable of receiving a body. It is within the physical structure of the *systema* that the actual role played by the void (as receiving the cosmos at the time of the conflagration) can be connected to its ontological status. In the case of language, distinguishing between the different elements which are conjoined in the production of speech, i.e. what status they have in reality (elements such as sound, concepts, meanings, syntax, and of course *lekta*), is crucial in order to understand how they can relate to one another when it comes to the production of meaningful speech.

The investigation into the place and role of *lekta* requires, to start with, that the location of *lekta* within the logical structure be properly charted. It is within that structure or part that the constellation of neighbouring but distinct elements comes to light, thereby setting out in what way *lekta* are distinct from them. The main poles of controversy about *lekta*, in antiquity and in the most recent scholarship, reside in the terms by which *lekta* are to be distinguished from their closest neighbours within the logical part of the system. It is therefore of the utmost importance to give the most accurate map of this structure as possible.

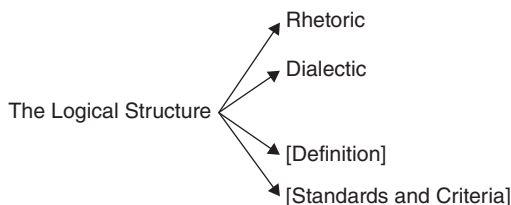
2.1.2. The Logical Structure of the *Systema*: the Distinction between Rhetoric and Dialectic

The logical structure of the Stoic *systema* contains dialectic and also, at least, rhetoric. According to some accounts, questions about definition, and also the standards and criteria of truth, are directly the concern of the logical part as well.¹¹

We can set out a first schematization as shown in the figure of the Map of the Logical Structure 2.1.¹²

¹¹ D.L. 7.41

¹² The brackets in the figure indicate that the last two appear as additional alternatives, not present in all our sources, whereas the first two are mentioned in all sources as core divisions, cf. also S.E. *M.* 7.24–5, see 2.2.7.1 below.



Map of the Logical Structure 2.1

Already, at this first level of ramification—each sub-part is itself further divided, as we shall see further down—the main concern of the Stoics is discernible: to distinguish elements pertaining to linguistic expression from what can be isolated from those elements, pertaining to what is now termed ‘dialectic’. Dialectic corresponds firstly to all that is distinguishable from questions of style of expression, and in general to the study of oratorical and narrative techniques—all of which belong to rhetoric. The Stoics say that rhetoric is concerned with ‘speaking well’ (*eu legein*) and dialectic with ‘discussing correctly’ (*orthōs dialegesthai*).¹³

The different terminologies are of course not enough to state the actual terms of the distinction. But they are enough for our purposes, to acknowledge that the Stoics not only consider them as distinct and distinguishable, but that what is distinctive about each is brought out through comparing the one with the other. Zeno gives an analogy with hand gestures: clenched fist for dialectic, extended fingers for rhetoric (S.E. *M.* 2.7; Cic. *Orat.* 113). Whatever we may think of the cogency of the analogy,¹⁴ it is clear that Zeno considers dialectic and rhetoric as close enough to be represented by the same symbol (the hand). That he means the distinction to be made in purely formalistic terms, however, i.e. that rhetoric and dialectic get the same thing said only more or less concisely, does not seem to be the conclusion to draw here.¹⁵ For it rather is the case that Zeno, and the Stoics in general, are interested in isolating dialectic quite strictly from all considerations of form and style. The result is that dialectic itself does not in fact have its own form.

In other words, dialectic is not represented by ‘a crisp and concise form’ (*en suntomia*) in a stereotypical contrast with ‘the lengthy’ (*en mēkei*) rhetorical form, as S.E. wants us to believe (S.E. *M.* 2.6–7). This is an over-simplification of S.E.’s in an attempt to find common ground between the Stoics and the

¹³ D.L. 7.42.

¹⁴ There is perhaps some confusion created by a similar hand analogy used by Zeno for the different degrees of knowledge (reported in Cic. *Acad.* 2.144–5) in which mere opinion corresponds to an open hand, and unshakeable knowledge is a hand in a fist. The two analogies do not seem to have any relation to one another, and do not gain in profundity of insight when juxtaposed.

¹⁵ Cf. LIEBERSOHN 2010 p.34.

Platonists: according to his conflation, both Stoics and Platonists think that ‘discussing’ (*‘dialegesthai’*) is said in two ways, the two just mentioned. But it is a distinction which jars with the strict division between ‘speaking well’ and ‘discussing correctly’, on the basis of which rhetoric and dialectic part company. Furthermore we learn from Cicero, through the mouthpiece of Crassus defending the Stoics in *De Oratore* (3.66), that rhetorical form according to the Stoics, would itself be unrecognizable compared to all other models of rhetoric. Mastery of Stoic rhetoric would be *‘abhorrens ab auribus’* (‘repulsive to the ears’), as well as requiring a redefinition (*‘alia vis’*, a ‘different meaning’) of commonly used words such as ‘honour’ or ‘disgrace’. What this implies is that rhetoric for the Stoics is not a ‘lengthy’ form compared to a non-rhetorical concision, as S.E. would have it. For the Stoics rhetoric has none of the mellifluous effects other schools give to it, as Crassus himself points out by running through the genealogy of Platonists as philosophers not only of ‘remarkable agility of mind’, but also endowed with ‘a profusion of eloquence’ (*‘divina . . . dicendi copia’*, referring to Carneades at *De Orat.* 3.68). Rhetoric for the Stoics is the clear-cut linguistic aspect involved in the expression of knowledge, which for the Stoics, as we have seen, is a *systema* of true states of mind, *katalēpseis*—which S.E. himself recalls in the same passage (*M.* 2.6). He adds in an aside that when the Platonists call rhetoric an *‘epistēmē’*, they mean by *epistēmē* an equivalent of art (*technē*), whereas the Stoics take *‘epistēmē’* to be a structured association of *katalēpseis* (cf. 1.3.3 above).

That the pillar-distinction of the logical part of philosophy is set between rhetoric and dialectic grounds some of the idiosyncratically Stoic tenets concerning oratory and rhetoric. For the Stoics, the orator is but another guise of the wise man (Cic. *De Orat.* 3.65). Rhetoric is thus another manifestation of virtue.¹⁶ For this reason Cicero has Crassus say that Stoic rhetoric would be painful to hear, not to mention obscure, anticipating here a commonplace accusation held against the Stoics for their indulgence in technical jargon, and their tendency to alienate themselves, gratuitously, from ordinary language.¹⁷ Part of the Stoics’ defence against this kind of accusation is the connection between rhetoric and dialectic. Rhetoric and dialectic are related in such a way that we do not have one without the other, but at the same time each has utterly distinct features. The isolation of these features, through contrast and comparison (rather than independent characterization), is the motor of the analysis, charting the map of the constituents of the logical part

¹⁶ Quint. 12.1.1 taking Cato as the model of the orator as a *‘vir bonus’*. See LONG 1978 p.103f.; LIEBERSOHN 2010 pp.32–5.

¹⁷ Cic. *Acad.* 2.16 reporting Arcesilaus criticizing Zeno for making mere ‘verbal alterations’ to pre-established accounts; similar critique in Galen *Meth. Med.* 10.155.7–8 and *Inst. Log.* 4.6; echoed in Simplicius in *Cat.* 312.26–7; but see also Sen. *Ep.* 117.5 on the earlier Stoics ‘distorting words’ (*‘verba torquere’*). See further ATHERTON 1993 pp.117–24.

of the *systema*. The schematization of these structural divisions thus gives a deceptively clear-cut picture of the distinction. This is, of course, both the advantage and disadvantage of any schematization. For though the distinction between dialectic and rhetoric is a foundational distinction, rhetoric and dialectic are also foundationally interrelated, as is every constitutive element in the *systema*.

Aristotle, in *De Interpretatione* 4, 17a4–6, leaves it to rhetoric to deal with prayers (*euchai*) and all other kinds of complete sentences which are not either true or false. Aristotle's object of study is the statement-making kind of sentence, the *logos apophantikos*, whose main characteristic is that it is either true or false. The distinction is therefore between statements and all other sentences which are the proper object of rhetoric. The Stoics make a different kind of distinction. True enough, the Stoics identify dialectic as the context within which to find what is either true or false (this will turn out to be the account of what the Stoics identify as an *axiōma*, a proposition, which plays a central role in dialectic, cf. D.L. 7.68–76). But in order to identify *axiōmata* the Stoics examine first what these have in common with, for example, prayers. The fact that both the statement and the prayer are *logoi* has, for the Stoics, a priority over their being different kinds of *logoi*. Propositions and prayers are therefore both the concern of dialectic, not of rhetoric. Truth and falsity are therefore not the only concern of dialectic. If they are not the only concern, it follows that what dialectic covers is not defined in terms of what is true or false. Indeed, one of the recurring definitions of dialectic for the Stoics is its being 'a science of what is true, what is false and what is neither true nor false'.¹⁸ There is something which makes the prayer similar to an *axiōma*, regardless of whether the one is always either true or false and the other is neither: namely that they are both *lekta*.¹⁹

To reach such a view, it is necessary to make distinctions very different from the ones made by Aristotle regarding rhetoric and the object of dialectic. The *lekta* which cover, amongst other things, prayers and statements, belong firmly under dialectic and not rhetoric—which also shows that the kind of expression and style which are the concern of rhetoric, for the Stoics, are not the kind of concern about expression that distinguishes prayers from statements. Thus it turns out that dialectic includes questions of expression: a part of dialectic is indeed devoted to utterances. What is thus distinguished from dialectic in the first place, through the contrast with rhetoric, namely questions concerning 'speaking well', is not a monopoly over expression, but only one aspect of expression. Another aspect belongs to dialectic.

¹⁸ D.L. 7.42, 7.63.

¹⁹ D.L. 7.65; S.E. M. 8.70ff.

2.2. DIALECTIC

There are more divisions and connections to consider: divisions which take into account, for instance, both what prayers and statements have in common, namely that both belong to dialectic, and what distinguishes them under dialectic one from another.

2.2.1. The Distinction between Signifier and Signified

Dialectic in the Stoic system is divided into two sub-parts: a part concerned with expressions which is covered under the general heading of ‘voice’ (*phōnē*) and which is also referred to as the part concerning signifiers (*sēmainonta*),²⁰ and a second part concerned with what is signified, the term invariably used in our sources being *sēmainomenon*.

It is in the part of dialectic concerned with voice, or specifically signifiers, that we find the elements of speech (the above-mentioned *logou merē* or *stoicheia logou*), to which Epictetus and Chrysippus referred as the key to accessing reason. Included under signifiers are also the criteria for the right or wrong combination of the elements of speech; the latter come in two modes: solecisms (ungrammatical sentences) and barbarisms (wrongly constructed individual words).²¹ The part covering signifiers also concerns the usage of the elements of speech in poetical discourse, the question of ambiguity, and the question of the musicality of words (in terms of euphony and music). D.L. 7.44, who reports these details, also adds that some Stoics add to this range questions pertaining to definition, division, and style. Thus it appears that matters of linguistic expression (grammar, correct combination and formation of words, and style) belong to the domain of signifiers and not to rhetoric, which is, in contrast, concerned with the general arrangement of discourse (D.L. 7.43). Rhetoric thus relies on all that the part on signifiers deals with, but its concerns are broader. For correct grammar precedes and is the grounding for broader questions concerning manner of expression and order of discourse.²² That the questions concerning signifiers belong, however, to a

²⁰ It is Chrysippus who prefers, and presumably establishes the term *σημαῖνον* (as emphasized at D.L. 7.62). See also the use of *σημαῖνον* in S.E. 8.8–12 (a key passage about the production of meaningful speech, on which see 8.1.3 below) rather than the term *φωνή* which is a general heading term covering both articulate and inarticulate sound (as described at D.L. 7.55–7; more in 5.1 below).

²¹ The contrast is spelled out by the Stoics, cf. D.L. 7.59, and taken up in many places by the grammarians: see for instance Ap. Dys. *Synt.* 3.273.10–1: *ὥς μᾶς λέξεως κακία ἐστὶν ὁ βαρβαρισμός, ἐπιπλοκῆς δὲ λέξεων ἀκαταλλήλων ὁ σολοικισμός*, ‘a barbarism is an error in one single word, a solecism is an error in the combination of words which do not fit together’.

²² On the contrast between rhetoric and the part of dialectic concerning voice see SCHENKEVELD 1990 pp.98–101, and on rhetoric in Stoicism GOURINAT 2000 p.35ff. See 5.1.3.3 below.

part of dialectic and not rhetoric, brings out the tight bond between signifiers and the other part of dialectic, namely things signified, rather than the (relatively) more indirect relation to rhetoric. It is the bond which is at the basis of the claim that knowledge of the elements of speech leads to grasping reason. And this on two counts: firstly, because the elements of speech are set out as correlatives of things signified, and secondly because, with what is signified, the elements of speech hold together the core of the logical structure of the Stoic *systema*.

The preferred use of the term '*sēmainon*' by Chrysippus (n. 20) highlights the connection between the two parts of dialect. For the terms '*sēmainonta*' and '*sēmainomena*' are related morphologically: they are, respectively, the active and passive participle forms of the verb '*sēmainein*' ('to signify'). The morphology suggests that a *sēmainomenon* corresponds to the passive result of the active contribution of a *sēmainon*. The activity is signifying. And indeed, a *phōnē*, voice or sound, is defined first and foremost in terms of its being active: 'voice acts'.²³ The result of this action is what is thereby signified, the thing signified, the *sēmainomenon*. Put this way, distinguishing between *sēmainonta* and *sēmainomena* perhaps seems artificial: for by definition, if something is a signifier, it signifies something and that something is what is signified.²⁴ However, the distinction enables the Stoics to make the following further distinctions: that (i) what is signified, the *sēmainomenon*, can be signified in a number of ways (different languages, different styles of expression, different expressions, spoken aloud, written, gestured, etc.) such that one *sēmainomenon* may have many and different *sēmainonta* which express it. Correspondingly, (ii) one *sēmainon* may signify different *sēmainomena*, as for example the word 'dog' which signifies sometimes a barking animal, sometimes a constellation (the dog-star), sometimes a kind of philosopher (the cynic).²⁵ It is, furthermore, possible to refer to a *sēmainomenon* without having in mind a corresponding *sēmainon*, just as it is possible to talk of a *sēmainon* without reference to the *sēmainomenon* it signifies, for example in talking about the morphology or accentuation of a word. Thus, insofar as we are interested in the fact that (say) two plus two equal four, this is a *sēmainomenon* which can be indifferently signified by a series of different *sēmainonta*, e.g. 'two plus two equal four', or ' $2 + 2 = 4$ ', or '*deux et deux font quatre*', etc. There is no necessary link between the *sēmainomenon* in question (namely that two plus two equal four) and any one signifier used to express it. But if the focus is, say, on how to order mathematical symbols, it will be the *sēmainon* ' $2 + 2 = 4$ ' which will be considered, regardless of the *sēmainomenon*

²³ D.L. 7.56: 'ποιεῖ δὲ ἡ φωνή'.

²⁴ Cf. LONG 2006b pp.237–8 speaking of the 'normative function' of *σημαίνοντα* and *σημαινόμενα*.

²⁵ A common example from our sources, e.g. at S.E. M. 11.29.

thereby signified. Two distinct constitutive groups are marked out for analysis: the signifiers on the one hand and what is signified on the other. Both have, from the start, different criteria of identity and conditions by which they relate one to another.

We are conveniently talking of ‘*sēmainonta*’ and ‘*sēmainomena*’ as if these terms clearly referred to identifiable items. We are taking advantage of the ease with which, in Greek, one can make substantives out of participles. But already the non-linear English translation, whereby it is easier to find a direct noun for the ‘*sēmainon*’, as ‘signifier’, than for the ‘*sēmainomenon*’, which needs a periphrasis as ‘thing signified’, is an indication that these designations do not identify clearly delineated items. Indeed, it is so far from obvious that there are items there to be distinguished at all, that the Stoics are the first in the tradition of western philosophy to attempt to do so. Distinguishing between signifiers and what is signified such as to establish the need for two separate paths of inquiry for each branch, radically demarcates the Stoic approach from preceding or rival schools, with a permanent and lasting influence on the development of logic and language to this day.

From the schema of dialectic alone it is clear that the distinction between signifiers and what is signified is a foundational aspect of Stoic dialectic. Plato, in particular in the *Sophist*, and also Aristotle, in *De Interpretatione* chapter 1, both present considerations about a distinction between some kind of individuated entities—Platonic Ideas, or affections of the soul (the *pathēmata tēs psuchēs*)—as distinct things indicated by spoken or written words. However, neither in Plato nor in Aristotle is this inception of a distinction between a thing and a term used to refer to it ever clearly analysed or established as a functioning distinction between a signifier and what is signified. Nor are the consequences of these distinctions actually envisaged, or made use of in other inquiries where the various accounts neither rely on a latent distinction nor require it. The Stoic distinction is more definite than for Plato or Aristotle because it implies a radical shift in ontological commitments. For the distinction is set up as a grounding element of the *systema*, at the basis of the logical structure. Time and time again, as we shall see, the clashes with rival and competing schools of thought on the question of *lekta*, are for the Stoics divergences on the relevance of the distinction between signifiers and things signified, which themselves come down to divergences about ontological commitments.

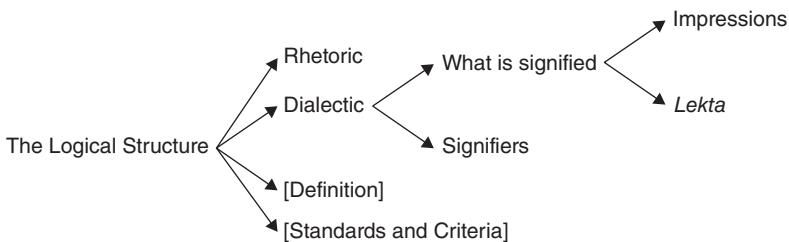
The study of *sēmainomena* is freed from all linguistic-related concerns which are dealt with under *sēmainonta*. Thus the distinction between *sēmainonta* and *sēmainomena* makes the study of the kind of things *sēmainomena* are—as distinct from signifiers—possible. However, *sēmainomena* are not themselves separate from language, given that they are what eventually gets signified through language. What is signified is thus autonomous, insofar as the thing which is signified is something there, in reality (as identified in the *systema*)

which is a *sēmainomenon*. But each *sēmainomenon* contains in itself elements which, when it comes to actually signifying the *sēmainomenon*, are determining, so as to make the signifier (*sēmainon*) signify this *sēmainomenon* specifically and not any other. There is thus a *sēmainomenon* which is, say, a particular prayer and which contains in it elements which, when the prayer gets expressed, are expressed by a prayer kind of signifier. But the expression is distinct from the prayer which is made. It can be made in different languages, using synonymous expressions, but it is one and the same prayer in virtue of the *sēmainomenon*, which is distinct from all the various modes of expression.

As noted, the very fact that it is difficult in English to emulate Greek's capacity for substantivization of participles, especially in the case of the 'thing signified', betrays more than a mere linguistic inflexibility. In comparison to the *sēmainonta*, the signifiers, which correspond, by and large, to a homogeneous group charted as kinds of voice, *phōnē* (pending greater attention to detail on this in chapter 5), what is signified is not described in the way the elements covered by the heading of 'expressions', or 'elements of speech' are. The difficulty in identifying what the things designated as 'things signified' are, is not just a problem of the English translation of '*sēmainomenon*', but rather a difficulty inherent in the move to distinguish the signified things themselves as in some way autonomous. What are these things? That they are not a homogeneous group, like the signifiers, and that there is a deeper reason we do not have a direct translation to indicate the things signified, is reflected by the Stoic analysis itself, which distinguishes further between two different kinds of things signified.

2.2.2. Two Kinds of *Sēmainomena*: Impressions and *Lekta*

There are two kinds of *sēmainomena*: impressions (*phantasiai*²⁶) and *lekta*. The Stoics thus unfold the map of the logical structure further, and the schema begun above can be extended as shown in the Map of the Logical Structure 2.2.



Map of the Logical Structure 2.2

²⁶ On translations of '*φαντασία*' see LESSES 1998 pp.4–5 and n.11.

Proceeding from the relatively more familiar to the least familiar, let us focus first on impressions. Why are impressions, corporeal modifications or imprints in our mind, generated from an external stimulus, and which serve as standards for truth and falsity²⁷ (i.e. refer to matters of epistemology), classified under *sēmainomena*? And secondly, why are impressions closest to *lekta* and therefore, following the rationale of the schematization, the most difficult to distinguish from *lekta*?

It is not surprising that impressions should belong to dialectic, which the Stoics define as the science of what is true, false and neither. For impressions, on Stoic doctrine, are the basis for determining how things are, and recognizing truth and falsehood.²⁸ There is one kind of impression in particular which the Stoics are famous for, the *kataleptic* impression which is supposed to provide a uniquely faithful representation of the way things are.²⁹ A *kataleptic* impression possesses a characteristic which distinguishes it from all other impressions, a determining feature 'like the horned snake compared to all other snakes' (S.E. 7.252). But whether an impression is *kataleptic* or not, an impression is what, for the Stoics, is at the basis of every epistemic process which ends with giving or withholding assent—not, as we shall see, to the impression itself, but rather to its content.³⁰ Assent to the content of a *kataleptic* impression results in *katalēpsis* (S.E. M. 7.151, 8.397), assent to the content of a non-*kataleptic* impression results in opinion (*doxa*). An opinion is true or false precisely because of the unreliability of the impression which has triggered it, whereas we can attain *katalēpsis* in virtue of the reliability of the impression which has generated it.

Assent, opinion, *katalēpsis* 'do not come about without impressions' (D.L. 7.49). More precisely: there must first be impressions before there can

²⁷ D.L. 7.49.

²⁸ Cf. Cic. *Acad.* 1.40–2 and 2.30–1; S.E. M. 7.152–3 and 7.227ff.; D.L. 7.49.

²⁹ The term '*kataleptic*' is sometimes translated as 'cognitive' on account of a *kataleptic* impression being a form of mental grasping and hence cognitive, but all rational impressions, whether they lead to mere opinion (because they are not clear enough), or knowledge (because they are unshakeably clear), are cognitive in that way. We shall therefore preserve the peculiarity of the Stoic coinage by keeping to the transliterated form '*kataleptic*'. Struggles with translation date back to the first attempts in Latin: see Cic. *Acad.* 1.41 who focuses on the passive form 'καταληπτόν': 'Visis [Cicero's translation for φαντασία] non omnibus adiungebat fidem sed is solum quae propriam quandam haberent declarationem earum rerum quae viderentur; id autem visum cum ipsum per se cerneretur, comprehendibile—feretis haec? Nos vero, inquit, quoniam enim alio modo καταληπτόν diceret?', 'He (Zeno) did not put trust in all impressions but only in those which had their particular way of making clear those things which they revealed. Since this kind of impression could be apprehended by itself, he called it graspable—can you bear this? Of course ([Atticus] said), for how else could you translate καταληπτόν?' On the *kataleptic* impression see D.L. 7.51; S.E. M. 7.152 and 7.249ff. See FREDE 1987d, REED 2002.

³⁰ See ANNAS 1992 p.73ff. who talks of assent as a 'process', thereby highlighting the interconnectedness of the stages leading from perception, to impression, to assent.

be assent (S.E. *M.* 8.398). Assent, followed by opinion or *katalēpsis* are characteristics of rational beings.³¹ It is not that rational beings have the *possibility* of forming opinions or even reaching *katalēpsis* on the basis of the impressions they receive; it is rather that they cannot help but form opinions and sometimes reach *katalēpsis* on the basis of their impressions (as noted in 1.3.4.1 above). The difference is significant. For the Stoics take the view that a rational being is wholly rational such that the operations of reason are necessarily set into practice and thus necessarily apply to all impressions—the first stage of which is in giving or denying assent. A number of questions may arise here concerning the conditions by which assent is determined by the kind of soul (foolish or wise) a person has. To what extent, that is, can a non-wise, and therefore foolish person resist assenting to a false impression precisely because they are not wise, rather than this having something to do with a faulty piece of reasoning which the person could have avoided? This is the kernel of an intense debate with the Platonists who press the Stoics to admit that assent is not, after all, up to us.³² But the Platonic attack is somewhat over-hasty in making the whole epistemic process subject to necessity when only one of its stages is in fact necessary. For what is unavoidable, and necessary, is the rationality of the soul of a rational being. What this comes down to is that all impressions are rational by the mere fact that they are received by a rational soul (Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1084B). There is no irrationality to be found in the soul of a rational being, for the soul is a unified body, and thus rational through and through.³³ Thus everyone, the foolish and the wise, only have rational impressions—the kind which, by nature, induce either assent or rejection.

³¹ See S.E. *M.* 7.154: ‘ἡ συγκατάθεσις οὐ πρὸς φαντασίαν γίνεται ἀλλὰ πρὸς λόγον’, ‘assent is relative not the impression, but to reason’; see also Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 903A–B. Moreover, being characteristics of reason, their origin in reason also associates them with questions about the voluntariness of assent, as noted in Cic. *Acad.* 1.40 and 2.37, and Epictetus in Aulus Gellius 19.1.16–18.

³² Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1057A, reports the debate between Chrysippus and the Academics on the inability of most people to resist false impressions (planted deliberately by a superior being, god or the wise man), showing that assent is not up to us after all. Alex. *Mant.* 172.25–173.3 offers a midway solution by emphasizing the capacity for deliberation (however flawed it may be) which is decisive in freeing rational beings from a pre-determined outcome: this secures assent as indeed up to us; on this see BARNES 2006 *esp.* pp.197–204. See also Cic. *Fat.* 42–4 distinguishing fate as an antecedent cause of our impressions, though our desires and capacity to assent (*appetitus* and *assensio*) are internal and the principal causes of our decisions and actions, hence ‘in our power’. See further FREDE 2011, *esp.* p.43f.

³³ Stob. *Ecl.* 1.9.33.10–12; Hierocles 4.44–6; on how rationality gradually takes the whole soul over, see Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B–C giving the age of seven as the limit after which we are wholly rational, D.L. 7.55 cites Diogenes of Babylon who speaks rather of the age of fourteen, as also Iamblichus, quoted by Stob. *Ecl.* 1.48.8.2–5. See BRENNAN 2005 p.154ff.

2.2.3. Rational and Irrational Impressions

A rational impression differs from an irrational impression such that a rational impression is a thought (*noēsis*), whereas irrational impressions, i.e. the impressions which arise in irrational beings, have no other name but that: irrational impressions (D.L. 7.51). The Stoic view about rationality commits the Stoics to the view that we cannot *not* have thoughts, which themselves cannot *not* be either assented to or rejected. The necessity therefore is in the need to decide between assent or rejection, but there is no necessity as to which, assent or rejection, a person will choose. So, we could follow Alexander (cf. n.32 above) in saying that the mere stage of deliberation frees a person from a pre-determined course of action. The Platonists, however, can still retort that the deliberation itself is fraught with pre-determined elements such as the flawed state of one's soul, which is in that state precisely because a foolish person considers things as good or bad which, in actual fact, are neither (e.g. health and wealth as goods, and their opposites as evils)—that is what makes that person foolish and not wise. This state will inevitably make the person's deliberation flawed from the start, leading him, inevitably, to assent to the wrong impressions. But Alexander does not represent the Stoics well. For the Stoic reply to the Platonists does not appeal to freedom in deliberation, but rather relies on the Stoic understanding of the necessity of becoming rational. That is, in necessarily becoming rational, we are also necessarily coming to realize what really is good and worth pursuing (namely reason and living according to the laws of reason). Our pursuit of this goal is impaired and impeded only by imprecisions and deficiencies in our learning processes and the flawed acquisition of conceptions of how things are. But we can make progress, therefore we are never pre-determined to assent or reject an impression.³⁴ This is how it is possible for anyone, fools and wise alike, to attain *katalēpsis*, through the possibility of recognizing a *kataleptic* impression³⁵—though only the wise will achieve *epistēmē*-knowledge which is the most secure of *kataleptic* states (D.L. 7.47).

No assent can be given to an irrational impression because there is nothing there to assent to. It is not only that there is no name for an irrational impression, it has fundamental dissimilarities with a rational impression such that it is incompatible with the process triggered by a rational impression

³⁴ D.L. 7.91: 'that virtue can be taught is clear from the case of fools becoming wise'.

³⁵ See S.E. *M.* 7.151; D.L. 7.91; Cic. *Fin.* 3.21; Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.51.4–5 and 2.7.6a–e; Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1046F. Following Stoic doctrine, it should be possible to get more and more *katalēpseis* such that at a certain point one has only *katalēpseis* which would then crystallize into *epistēmē*-knowledge; it would be the crucial turning-point at which one 'suddenly' becomes wise: Plut. *Prof.* 75C and *Comm. Not.* 1063A–B on the drowning analogy whereby a man is said to drown whether he is right under the surface of the water, or at the bottom of the ocean. On the possibility of progress through the possibility of sometimes having *katalēpsis* see BRONOWSKI 2016.

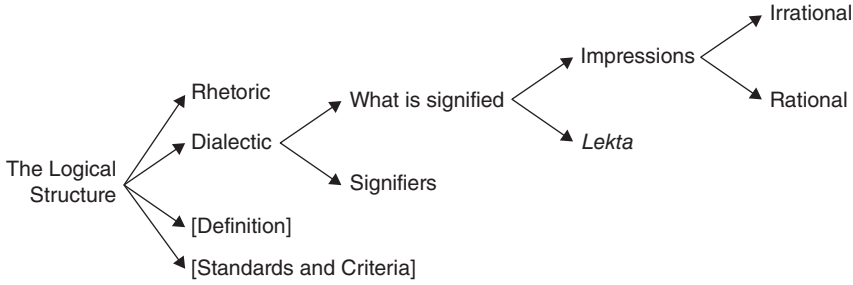
(which ends in assent or rejection). That the Stoics give an additional name to the rational impression, calling it a thought, is an indication of how distinct the rational impression is from the irrational one. And yet it is crucial to bear in mind not only that there are irrational impressions, but that, belonging as they do to a sub-division of the impressions, they too are sub-divisions of things signified (*sēmainomena*) in the overall schema of dialectic.

The schematic proximity is revelatory of the fundamental tensions which mark out both the distinctness, and the difficulty of isolating the distinctness, of one element of the structure from another. Rational impressions are first and foremost impressions. They therefore share something foundational with irrational impressions, in that they are both impressions. What they foundationally have in common with irrational impressions is also what sets out the terms of the difference between impressions, in general, and *lekta*, the other branch of things signified. There is thus more in common between irrational and rational impressions than between impressions and *lekta*. The distinction between rational impressions and *lekta* is therefore all the more clear-cut.

The connections between *lekta* and rational impressions are complex. They constitute one of the great bones of contention in Stoic studies and interpretation, from its earliest representatives to its most recent, revolving around the question of whether *lekta* are independent of the mind or not.³⁶ If they are not independent of the mind, they are coincidental with the content of impressions, and dependent on having impressions in the first place. In the following pages we shall go through the grounds for the reasons to think that this should be the Stoic view—which is never spelt out in this way. In going through the details of the argumentation, we shall also see why this cannot be the whole story. In this book, we shall be building a case for an account of *lekta* according to which *lekta* are independent of the mind. That is to say that they are therefore independent of us having impressions and cannot be put down to merely constitute the mental content of impressions.

The first, humble piece of argumentation for this claim lies in straightforwardly reading the map of the logical structure of the Stoic *systema*. We must take stock of what it means, firstly, that there are two different kinds of *sēmainomena*, and secondly, that there are two kinds of impressions, before anticipating conclusions about the connection between impressions and *lekta*. For the distinction between two kinds of impressions takes precedence over the distinction from *lekta* in a preliminary account of the distinctness of

³⁶ The coincidentalists appear amongst the Aristotelian commentators, who take the Stoic *lekta* to be just the same things, under a different term, as the Aristotelian παθήματα τῆς ψυχῆς, the affections of the soul (e.g. Simplicius in *Cat.* 10.3). The Aristotelians have a consistent endorsement in contemporary scholarship, e.g. ISNARDI-PARENTE 2005.



Map of the Logical Structure 2.3

impressions compared to the neighbours of impressions in the constellation of items in this part of the *syntēma*. The completed schema is shown in Figure 2.3.

For there to be assent or rejection, there must be something of the kind that can be assented to (or rejected); something to which one can say ‘yes, it is the case that P’, or ‘no, it is not the case that P’. There must be a [that P] there, i.e. some sort of articulation of the content of the impression, which forms the basis for what can then be agreed to or rejected. A crucial feature of the rational impression, which triggers the process leading to assent (or rejection), is the presence of an internal structure or articulation conducive to assent or dissent, an articulation which is simply absent from the irrational impression. The qualitative leap from irrational to rational is thus enabled by the transformative feature which characterizes the content of the rational impression.

It is not that irrational impressions have no content. For both rational and irrational impressions have a content. This is what having an impression comes down to: a perceptive being has an impression of something, or is impressed by something. It is a corporeal reaction of the corporeal soul. As such, it is the characteristic of any being with a soul.³⁷ The Stoics say an impression is an ‘imprinting in the soul’ (*tupōsis en psuchēi*) of something or an ‘alteration’ (*alloiōsis*) of the soul to represent what it has been impressed with (D.L. 7.50). Thus the content is whatever the impression is of. It is part and parcel of what it is to have an impression, that it is an impression of X, where X need not be in any way conceptualized, recognized, or anticipated (stages which belong to the rational reception of impressions), but merely the stand-in for whichever external impressor has produced the impression. It is

³⁷ D.L. 7.51; Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900E: ‘φαντασία... ἔστι πάθος τὸ ἐγγεγενημένον διὰ τῆς ὁράσεως ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ’, ‘an impression [...] is an affection arisen through sight in the soul’ (the other sense-receptors are adduced in the following sentence). Hierocles *Elem.* 4.39–52 describes the characteristics of the animal, ζῷον, made up of ‘tangible body and soul, both subject to pressure’, together with the soul, characterized as having a ‘perceptive faculty’. See similar descriptions in Eusebius *PE* 15.20.4; Ps-Galen *Intr.* 726.10–11.

something in addition, that the content of a rational impression comes to be articulated in the relevant way.

The Stoic account of the development of reason enables us to sketch out what this articulation consists in: at birth, human beings start out as irrational beings, they receive a host of sense-impressions and act impulsively on them for the sake of their own preservation.³⁸ These impressions in human beings, however, in contrast with animals, begin to be stored and classified such as to form conceptions (*ennoiai*) based on similarities encountered through these various sense experiences: for example, many perceived white objects leave memory-traces in our minds from which the conception of white arises, and so on and so forth with other perceptions, as the number and complexity of our conceptions grow.³⁹

Having conceptions enables us to refine and clarify our impressions by allowing us to articulate the content of our impressions. Conceptions do not become part of our impressions, but rather guarantee our capacity to discriminate between different elements contained within the impression. For they enable us to recognize in the newly formed impression at least some familiar elements, either through similarity with pre-registered sense-perceptible elements (e.g. white) or through more intellectually formed conceptions (e.g. mathematical truths, such as that all triangles have their internal angles equal to 180 degrees).⁴⁰ What this recognition comes down to, is an ability to attribute something to something else, by putting order amongst the different elements contained in the impression: e.g. white can be attributed to the thing we are having an impression of right now, and also page can be attributed to at least part of that same impression. We then no longer have the impression of white, or of a white page, but we rather have the impression that the thing in front of us is a page, and that it is white. We thus articulate the content of the impression and give it an internal order. Relying thus on our stored trove of conceptions, we come to be able, with increasing expertise, to distinguish elements in the impression by attributing ‘_ is P’ where the gap is a place-holder for a recognizable or unrecognizable element of the impression whose first characteristic is to have ‘is P’ attributable to it. It is a trove which, crucially, we cannot help but constitute (because that is what becoming rational implies).

³⁸ See D.L. 7.85; Cic. *Fin.* 3.16f.; Sen. *Ep.* 121.14–18.

³⁹ Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B–C; Cic. *Acad.* 2.21.

⁴⁰ The *Placita* passage which recounts this process in detail (Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B–C) refers to two methods of association ‘through sense-perception’ and ‘through instruction and diligence’. See FREDE 1987d p.153f. on the grounding role of sense-perception in the formation of impressions, even of the seemingly purely intellectual kind. See also DYSON 2009 p.30f. who focuses on how conceptions can then be taken as criteria for truth: for it is on the basis of the conceptions we manage to accumulate that we are able to discern whether an impression is *kataleptic* or not.

Depending on our experiences and surroundings, the trove will be more or less rich.⁴¹ The more conceptions we acquire, and the more distinct they are (e.g. distinct between a wolf and a dog, and then between different breeds of dogs, etc.), the better placed we are to recognize properly the sort of things which are presented to us through our impressions. What is more, the more refined our conceptions, the more liable we are to recognize impressions as *kataleptic* because we can draw out the right conception for what we have an impression of. We are able to represent the content of our impression as what things really are, through a correct articulation of all the elements contained in it. It is not the characteristics of the *kataleptic* impression however which interest us here, but rather the role played by our reason in conceptualizing our impressions. As it does this, we become increasingly rational. The double operation of conceptualizing (i.e. storing memory-traces) and applying concepts when receiving new impressions is the key to this process, by which a non-articulated content (e.g. the impression of a white page) is processed into an ordered content. This ordered content is a propositional content, whereby one thing is attributed (according to an order of attribution) to another (e.g. attributing white to the page in front us)—and this is so whether the content is true or not.

2.2.4. Propositional Content

A rational being does not have the mere impression of S but rather the impression, or thought, of S's being P, or that S is P. This is the propositional content, which is set out in terms of a relation of attribution such that one thing is attributed to another, rightly or wrongly. A rational impression is one of which we can say what it is that we have an impression of, where 'to say' is understood as getting something said of something. This is as much as can be appraised from a first, grounding reading of our sources, in which the specificity of the rational impression is indicated by the double characteristic of the communicability of the content and its articulated form, the one feature being inseparable from the other. This is expressed in our texts by the use of *logos* which, in this context, I now translate as 'propositional form':

thought [...] enunciates in propositional form (*logō*) that which has been received by the impression.⁴²

⁴¹ This is captured by Annas's formula 'perceiving is thinking', ANNAS 1992 p.75, to say that we cannot perceive without directly conceptualizing what is brought to us through perception.

⁴² D.L. 7.49: 'ἡ διάνοια [...] ὁ πάσχει ὑπὸ τῆς φαντασίας, τοῦτο ἐκφέρει λόγῳ'.

a rational impression is one in which what is impressed can subsist in propositional form (*logō*).⁴³

There is order in our thoughts. The way that reason and order impose themselves in our thoughts is through propositional articulation.

Talk of propositional content is not talk of propositions. To say that thoughts have a propositional content does not imply that the content of thoughts is a proposition.⁴⁴ This is important on two counts. Firstly, for the Stoics, the mechanisms by which impressions are formed, and the development and nature of reason, are recognized, not in terms of a process of inferences (involving true or false propositions), but as a relation to the world. Secondly, the accounts of status and nature of propositions, which the Stoics call '*axiōmata*', are developed by the Stoics in contexts which are not bound to the analysis of the mechanisms of the mind. Both of these points are linked and have manifestly turned out to be controversial in the literature.

In the literature, both ancient and modern, there is a tendency to take the propositional content of impressions as in fact a proposition. This reading takes rationality to be fundamentally a capacity to produce arguments and make inferences on the basis of propositions formed in the mind. On this understanding, reason concerns only those impressions whose contents are propositions, the sort of content which is either true or false. It is our conceptions which play the role of yardsticks, insofar as it is on the basis of the conceptions we accumulate that we are able to discern whether an impression is *kataleptic* or not. The impression is part of the inference which leads to assent or rejection of the impression. To take an example, the impression, say, that S is clever is verified through our conception of S as an Athenian, and that all Athenians are clever.⁴⁵ The conclusion of this reasoning is the assent to the impression. This line of interpretation takes it also as a given that *lekta* (and hence propositions as a kind of *lekton*) are mental items themselves and are thus born in the mind, as contents we produce through reasoning over our impressions.

2.2.4.1. Can a Dog have Logos?

The first question which arises from this line of interpretation is what, then, makes an impression rational? For if rationality consists in being capable of

⁴³ S.E. M. 8.70: 'λογικὴν δὲ εἶναι φαντασίαν καθ' ἣν τὸ φαντασθὲν ἔστι λόγῳ παραστήσαι'.

⁴⁴ On this see FREDE 1987d p.154f., FREDE 1994c p.57. See BOBZIEN in *CHHP* p.93 on the distinction between the 'multi-functionality' of the propositional content in contrast to the mono-function of a proposition. See also LESSES 1998 *esp.* p.18ff. who focuses on propositional form as narrowing down the contents of impressions.

⁴⁵ SORABJI 1990b, LESSES 1998, and DYSON 2009 pp.30–1 specifically on conceptions as criteria for truth.

going through formalized steps of inference, and concepts come into play as validators of these steps, it is not something intrinsic to the impression itself which marks it out as rational rather than irrational. Not surprisingly, this line of interpretation tends to minimize the importance of the distinction between irrational and rational impressions. We find thus, amongst the defenders of this line, a shared recourse to the Chrysippean example of the dog as dialectician: the dog who, at a three-way crossroads, sniffs one path, then another, and then, without sniffing it, chooses the third path (S.E. *PH* 1.69). It would appear that the dog has performed some form of reasoning along these lines: it is not the first, nor the second, therefore it must be the third—and indeed it has been interpreted that way.⁴⁶ However, endorsing the reasoning of the dog in this way comes at a certain cost, that of brushing aside the few but precious words of commentary Chrysippus leaves us about the example. Chrysippus does not say that the dog is actually reasoning, rather the whole point of the example is to show that it is ‘as if’ (the term used is ‘*dunamei*’) the dog were reasoning, but in fact does not. The text suggests that if the dog could, he would, but actually he does not reason.⁴⁷ A defence of the reasoning dog must either disregard the final ‘as if’ caveat, or start quibbling on degrees of reasoning. The line then consists of appealing to only the simplest propositions being available to the dog, thereby restricting the dog’s capacity to advance to more complex forms of reasoning. This interpretation focuses on reason as a process of inference, to reconstruct, in hindsight, the propositions which lie at the basis of reasoning, and which are thus considered as the contents of the dog’s impressions. The dog reasons, therefore his impressions are propositions.

However, the developmental account of reason shows us that the Stoics do not think that making inferences is what reason or rationality fundamentally is. It rather consists in acquiring conceptions (of lesser or greater precision).⁴⁸ We do so by activating the conceptions we have already acquired so as to sift

⁴⁶ SORABJI 1990b pp.308–9 interprets Chrysippus’ dog as an example of an irrational being acting on the basis of impressions in which some form of predication is involved. LESSES 1998 p.19f. acknowledges that Chrysippus denies actual reasoning to the dog, and invalidates the simple predicative attitude suggested by Sorabji, but still takes the examples to develop (p.21) a combined account of rational and irrational impressions as indicative of their causes, making the animal (rational or irrational) aware that he/she/it is having an impression of something and thus granting a basic propositional attitude to irrational beings as well as rational; both are aware that they have the impression that P, which paves the way to complete an inference of the form: ‘but if P, then Q; therefore Q’. See also LABARRIÈRE 1993 pp.231–6 who pushes for reconstructing ‘simple impressions’ (as in S.E. 8.276) for irrational beings.

⁴⁷ On irrationality regained see ANNAS 1992 p.60, FREDE 1987d p.154.

⁴⁸ This is what transpires from the *Placita* passage cited in nn. 39 and 40 above. Rationality is a path towards knowledge and indeed, as is well-known, the Stoic wise man is the man who has perfected his reason and thus has *epistēmē*, i.e. ‘unshakeable, steadfast’ knowledge: Cic. *Leg.* 17.22; S.E. *M.* 7.151; Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.51.5–6; Ps-Galen *Def. Med.* 19.350.3f. And see FREDE 1994c p.54f.

through new impressions, recognizing elements of their content and distinguishing these from unfamiliar elements. We thereby articulate their contents in the relevant way. One of the features of concept acquisition is that we are able to attribute something of the form ‘_ is P’ to anything which falls in the ball park of that conception in virtue of some discerned similarity. The more precise the conception, the closer to target we will be in our attributions. So, becoming rational is getting increasingly better, not at reasoning in terms of making arguments and inferences, but rather at associating, with ever more fine-grained precision, the right conception with what we have an impression of (which we do by articulating the content of our impressions in a propositional form). It is not that the Stoics think a dog cannot make inferences, however simple they may be. It is rather that this is simply not what the Stoics are interested in when accounting for what it is to be rational. For what rationality is, first and foremost, is something the dog cannot possibly have (according to the Stoics), namely an ever increasing trove of conceptions. To be rational is thus to be able to make use of this trove by articulating the contents of impressions according to an attributive schema, ‘_ is P’ where P is rightly or wrongly attributed to S, which is rightly or wrongly recognized as S. Making inferences and further reasoning derives from this grounding characteristic of reason, and that is why the dog only ‘as if’ reasons, because without the grounding feature of rationality, all further similarities are mere look-alikes.

2.2.4.2. *Propositional Content and Propositions: the Role of Logos-reason*

When the Stoics talk about *logos*-reason in the mind, they are not only, or even principally, talking about a process of inference, but rather, first and foremost, of a certain way of receiving sense-data. This is indicated in our two passages above (with nn. 42 and 43), by the use there of the term ‘*logos*’: it designates an internal organization of the content of the impression. Reason receives the data from impressions by ordering one thing with respect to another; the way this occurs in thought is through attributing something to something else. To reason is thus to set out the data in propositional form. Why is this not the same as talking of a proposition?

There is a fundamental tie, for the Stoics, between propositional form and rationality. For this kind of articulation, which occurs in thought, mirrors the order of how things are arranged in reality. The wise man, who has correct reason, assents only to those impressions which are *kataleptic*, that is those in which the articulated content mirrors the articulations of how things actually are. In his case, the articulations of thought are in effect a mapping of the order of the world. But the propositional articulation occurs in the mind of every rational being, foolish or wise. The content varies, there may be a correct or

misguided ordering of the articulation, but the articulation is always present. There is a stage at which the content of our impressions undergoes a propositional configuration, before, that is, we commit the impression to a further process by which we assent to or reject it. It is a crucial stage, demarcating two moments in rationality: (i) the moment in which the content of an impression is appraised and ordered, and (ii) the moment in which assent is given or denied. These two moments in the epistemic process lead any being lacking reason to be barred, from the start, from the possibility of reasoning, however simple that reasoning may be. For having one's impressions set out in propositional form is not yet to bind the impression to the process of inferences triggered by what is perceived.

None of our extant texts record that the content of impressions are propositions; and it is quite clear that talk of *logos* in our passages is not in any way the same as talking about propositions, or *axiōmata*, which is the Stoics' preferred term.⁴⁹ The Stoics are thus careful to keep distinct the kind of articulation characteristic of thought, the *logos* or propositional form, from committing to talk of the content of impressions as propositions (*axiōmata*). True enough, having an impression leads to assent to its content, or rejection of it.⁵⁰ And we assent to, or reject, propositions.⁵¹ More precisely, the Stoics say that we assent or reject *axiōmata*. The *axiōma* is defined as 'that which can be affirmed, or denied, as far as itself is concerned'.⁵² At this present stage of inquiry, it is not so much an analysis of the *axiōma* that concerns us, but a broad view of the differences between the way that the Stoics identify *axiōmata* and the propositional articulation, characteristic of rational impressions, which we could also call a rationalized articulation (to convey the use of '*logos*' in the passages from D.L. and S.E. referred to in nn.39 and 40 above).

The *axiōma* is one kind of *lekton* whose specificity is established, following the description above, on the basis of two features: its being 'affirmable' ('*apophanton*') and its being self-sufficient, which is the purport of the formula 'as far as itself is concerned'. For these features properly to carry the weight of being distinguishing factors (distinguishing *axiōmata* from prayers, questions, commands, and so on), they have to be understood in a way which brings out the contrasts with the other *lekta*. Thus 'being affirmable' indicates that what is

⁴⁹ See FREDE 1974 p.32 and SEDLEY 1977 esp. p.77 on the appropriation of the notion of an *axiōma* by the Stoics from the Dialectical School, and 7.1 below.

⁵⁰ Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1056E 'φαντασίας ἀγωγούς ἐπὶ τὴν συγκατάθεσιν', 'impressions leading to assent'; Alex. *Mant.* 97.14–15: 'ἐν ᾧ ἡ φαντασία, ἐν τούτῳ καὶ αἱ συγκαταθέσεις', 'where there is an impression, there are also assents'; S.E. *M.* 7.405: '...φαντασίαι παρόσον ἐπάγονται ἡμᾶς εἰς συγκατάθεσιν', 'impressions insofar as they draw us towards assent', and similarly in other testimonies.

⁵¹ Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.9b.4: 'συγκαταθέσεις μὲν ἀξιώμασι τισιν', 'acts of assent are towards *axiōmata*', also S.E. *M.* 7.154.

⁵² D.L. 7.65: 'ἀξιώμα ἐστὶ τὸ ἀποφαντὸν ἢ καταφαντὸν ὅσον ἐφ' ἑαυτῷ'; S.E. *M.* 8.73. See 9.1 below.

at stake, in affirming something (or denying it), is the establishment of a thing's being the case (or not); as for self-sufficiency, this marks out the specificity of the *axiōma* compared to other self-complete (*autotelē*) *lekta* (these comprise questions, commands, exclamations, and so on).⁵³ There must be two degrees of self-sufficiency involved in qualifying the *axiōma* as self-sufficient: following Bobzien's analysis, the first level specifies that the affirmation itself of an *axiōma* contains all that is required to affirm that something is the case—it is not an *axiōma*, in other words, if something in addition is required to fulfil that purpose. At the second level, the *axiōma* is self-sufficient in that it expects no answer in return, no fulfilment of a promise, or confirmation of what it states; it has, in short, nothing more than itself to declare.⁵⁴ Furthermore, there is a clear-cut distinction between being affirmable, i.e. getting something stated as being (or not) the case, and accounting for the truth-conditions which verify what is thereby stated. But the content of the rational impression is not automatically affirmable in the way which is characteristic of the *axiōma*, since, at the first stage of articulating content, nothing is yet affirmable in the strong sense the *axiōma* relies on, with all that self-sufficiency implies. There is therefore a distinction to account for between a propositional content and an *axiōma*.

2.2.4.3. Propositional Content and Propositions: the Role of Assent

There are, what is more, different kinds of impressions: the most well-known, referred to above, is the *kataleptic* impression, the kind which 'drags us by the hair towards assent' (S.E. 7.257). Its very particularity indicates that there are impressions which precisely do not lead us so imperiously towards assent. It follows that it is not being affirmed or denied, and thereby assented to or rejected, which characterizes the content of an impression. This is why the Stoics are so insistent on the conduciveness of impressions to assent, rather than building up a theory by which having an impression implies assent to or rejection of it. Thus, impressions 'lead to', 'draw towards', 'conduct to', or indeed 'drag to' assent (cf. n.50 above). This marked insistence is an emphatic way of distinguishing between the content of the impression and what actually gets assented to or rejected, which is an *axiōma*. For leading to is not the same as requiring, or imposing, or causing assent (or rejection), as Chrysippus duly notes, quoted by Plutarch:

Wishing to demonstrate that an impression is not self-sufficient to be a cause of assent, he [Chrysippus] said that the wise would then be doing wrong when they

⁵³ A list of self-complete kinds of *lekta* is given in D.L. 7.65–8; on the characterization of the *axiōma* 'as far as itself is concerned', see FREDE 1974 pp.34–9, BOBZIEN 1986 pp.11–14, and 9.1.4 and 9.1.5 below.

⁵⁴ BOBZIEN 1986 pp.12–13.

produce false impressions, were impressions self-sufficient for assent; for often the wise make use of falsehood, when they are dealing with fools, to bring about a probable impression but certainly not so as to be a cause for assent, since then it would also be the cause of a hasty assumption and deception.⁵⁵

The wise are blameless (*'ablabeis'*, D.L. 7.123). They can do no wrong, neither to themselves nor to anyone else. This is the premiss Chrysippus is relying on here. It is therefore impossible, and self-contradictory, to impute to the wise man any part in a wrong action or outcome. He cannot ever actually deceive, or do wrong by anyone. Though it may be the case that the wise man will generate the relevant stimuli liable to produce an impression of something which is not the case, he will do so only from his virtuous, that is all-knowing, disposition. S.E., at *M.* 7.43, affixes the qualifier *'asteia'* to this disposition: 'from an urbane disposition', which is explained through the contrast to 'not from a bad one'.⁵⁶ This is very likely a direct Stoic qualifier, one we have already encountered in 1.3.4.2 above. It is a qualification which recalls the wise man's double citizenship of his local city and of the cosmos, making him both urban (i.e. part and contributor to the good workings of the city) and urbane (i.e. living according to the law of nature and reason). Having knowledge, the wise man has good reasons for inducing false impressions in those who are not wise, because he both knows the causes and foresees the consequences, which a fool is both too ignorant and too short-sighted to grasp.⁵⁷ But what Chrysippus insists on, and Plutarch then suggests is unacceptable, is that, for the non-wise, having the impression need not induce them to assent to it. It is not in the power of the impression, because of the sort of thing it is, to be the sort of thing one assents to or rejects; it is not the kind of thing which in itself is ready, or is sufficient, to be assented to or rejected.

What Plutarch objects to, and what Chrysippus is saying, are actually two different things: Plutarch's underlying critique is that the wise man is manipulating the fool into doing something the fool would not otherwise do, using falsehoods to bring about a desired outcome, because the wise man knows the fool, being a fool, cannot not assent to the falsehood given to him.⁵⁸ It is clear the Stoics are aware of this kind of critique, but they parry it by

⁵⁵ Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1055F–1056A: 'τὴν γὰρ φαντασίαν βουλόμενος οὐκ οὖσαν αὐτοτελή τῆς συγκαταθέσεως αἰτίαν ἀποδεικνύειν, εἴρηκεν ὅτι "βλάψουσιν οἱ σοφοὶ ψευδεῖς φαντασίας ἐμποιοῦντες, ἂν αἱ φαντασίαι ποιῶσιν αὐτοτελῶς τὰς συγκαταθέσεις· πολλάκις γὰρ οἱ σοφοὶ ψεύδει χρόνται πρὸς τοὺς φαύλους καὶ φαντασίαν παριστᾶσι πιθανήν, οὐ μὴν αἰτίαν τῆς συγκαταθέσεως· ἐπεὶ καὶ τῆς ὑπολήψεως αἰτία τῆς ψευδοῦς ἔσται καὶ τῆς ἀπάτης".'

⁵⁶ S.E. *M.* 7.43: 'μὴ ἀπὸ κακῆς, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ ἀστείας διαθέσεως'.

⁵⁷ S.E. *M.* 7.42–4; Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.11m.94–9.

⁵⁸ Plutarch here is, in parallel, criticizing the account of determinism through antecedent causes ('transferring to fate, what is said here about the wise man' (*Stoic. Rep.* 1056A): it is hypocritical of the Stoics, says Plutarch, to claim that assent is not automatic, if they hold that everything is determined; for fate, like the sage, governs the state of mind of the foolish who, being such, will automatically assent to the wrong thing, being predisposed to do so.

addressing another question altogether. They are relying on a distinction between epistemology and psychology on the one hand, and logic on the other. They treat the question as a question of logic. The wise man himself does not assent to the falsehood he puts forward to the fool. The fool, in turn, receives an impression brought about by means of the wise man. What the fool has received is not the sort of thing which is affirmed or denied in itself. It is an impression, whose content is not however that which the fool will end up assenting to or rejecting—that is something else, which is a function of an epistemic and psychological input utterly dependent on the subject, and not on the impression received from the wise man.

The impression, as Plutarch reports, is said by Chrysippus not to be ‘sufficient’ or ‘self-sufficient’ for assent. This is no random choice of words from Chrysippus.⁵⁹ For the term, as we have already seen, qualifies specifically the *axiōma*, the sort of item which contains all that is needed to be affirmed or denied, without any additional elements necessary for that purpose. That the impression lacks this fundamental qualification of self-sufficiency sets out clearly the distinction Chrysippus is making between the initial articulated content of an impression, and an *axiōma*: namely that the impression has a grounding propositional, or rationalized, structure which is multi-functional. The impression, that is, lacks the determining elements which make its internal structure mono-functional, such as the *axiōma*, whose sole function is to be affirmed or denied. It is thus not the impression which is assented to or rejected but rather something else relative to it, but also relative to the assenting subject, which alters the propositional form so as to constitute a fully fledged proposition or *axiōma*. The Stoics do not say that because we assent to *axiōmata*, the contents of our impressions are therefore *axiōmata*.

2.2.5. Propositional Content and Verbalization: Stoics and Epicureans

In a comparison of Stoic and Epicurean accounts of impressions, Gisela Striker marks out the Stoics as relying on what she describes as an ‘automatic translation’ of the impression into a proposition.⁶⁰ With the qualification of ‘automatic’, Striker captures the inevitability of rationality for the Stoics, a process triggered by the mere reception of an impression. However, both talk of ‘translation’ and the view she expounds here, of a transformation into

⁵⁹ Chrysippus is the foremost logician of the Greek Stoa, D.L. 7.180: ‘Οὕτω δ’ ἐπίδοξος ἐν τοῖς διαλεκτικοῖς ἐγένετο, ὥστε δοκεῖν τοὺς πλείους ὅτι εἰ παρὰ θεοῖς ἦν [ἡ] διαλεκτική, οὐκ ἂν ἄλλη ἦν ἢ ἡ Χρυσίππειος’, ‘He had such a reputation in matters of dialectic that most people thought that if there was any dialectic amongst the gods, it would be none other than that of Chrysippus’.

⁶⁰ STRIKER 1996c p.84f.

words of the impression, run the risk of overemphasizing the Stoic account for the sake of a clear-cut contrast with Epicurus. Striker's main focus is on the Epicurean view, specifically arguing that language for the Epicureans is deficient. It falls short of all that is made present through sense-impressions and contained in them. For the Epicureans a proposition, understood as a verbalization of the impression, is incapable of capturing all that is given in the impression. It is restrictive, whereas, by contrast, Striker shows, for the Stoics, verbalization is an all-encompassing decoder of the impression, which leaves nothing out. The contrast is neatly set up and is undoubtedly useful in order to distinguish the Epicureans and their diffidence about language. Striker's focus on language—because the critique of a language-based approach to structuring the world is an important part of the Epicurean position—gives shape to the notion of a proposition whose structure is dictated by the possibilities (and limitations) of language. This makes the idea of a proposition as the content ('automatically translated') of an impression eminently suspicious to an Epicurean. But as far as the Stoics are concerned, it is not clear at all that this is how they envisage what a proposition, or what they call an *axiōma*, is. For the *axiōma* is not defined in linguistic terms at all.⁶¹ If we take away this constricting linguistic cap, an impression, for the Stoics, need not necessarily correspond to only and exactly what language—or our known language—is capable of expressing. Rather the reverse. An impression contains all that can be rationalized, that is to say, all that can be set out in a propositional form, as long as we have the concepts capable of sifting through the data.

The natural development of reason in us evolves in correspondence with our experience, (*empeiria*),⁶² and is thus dependent on our experience for the forging of our conceptions (not only on the basis of sense-perception, but also through 'instruction and diligence', as our *Placita* source tells us). Hence the Stoics speak of expertise as a factor which modifies and qualifies our impressions:

some impressions are expert, *technikai*, others non-expert, *atechnoi* (D.L. 7.51).

⁶¹ This is why here too we prefer a transliteration, '*axiōma*', rather than falling back on the over-connoted term 'proposition'. Cic. *Inv.* 1.67 speaks of a '*propositio*' referring to a logical premiss, translating both Aristotle's '*protasis*' and '*logos apophantikos*' (e.g. Arist. *Int.* 4, 17a2–3 and 17a9–12). He inaugurates the use of the term in the Latin texts, e.g. from Aulus Gellius 2.7.21, to Apuleius all through *Int.* 1, to Boethius (e.g. *in de Int.* 7.12–18), who hands down this terminology to the medieval Scholastics. See LONDEY & JOHANSON 1987 pp.53ff. and GASKIN 2009 esp. pp.8–17 on *propositio* and 'proposition' in the twentieth-century analytic tradition.

⁶² Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B: 'ὅταν γεννηθῇ ὁ ἄνθρωπος, ἔχει τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν μέρος τῆς ψυχῆς ὥσπερ χαρτίον εὐεργὸν εἰς ἀπογραφὴν. εἰς τοῦτο μίαν ἐκάστην τῶν ἐννοιῶν ἐναπογράφεται. πρῶτος δὲ [ὁ] τῆς ἀναγραφῆς τρόπος ὁ διὰ τῶν αἰσθήσεων' [...] ὅταν δ' ὁμοειδέις πολλὰ μνημαὶ γίνωνται, τότε φαιμέν ἔχειν ἐμπειρίαν· ἐμπειρία γάρ ἐστι τὸ τῶν ὁμοειδῶν <φαντασιῶν> πλήθος', 'when we are born, our souls are like blank sheets of paper onto which conceptions get inscribed; the first method of inscription is through sense-perception [...] when we have many similar memory-traces [of things perceived], that is when we say we have *empeiria* (experience); *empeiria* is a plurality of similar impressions'.

The contrast is between an acquired proficiency, which makes a person an expert in distinguishing, say, between different breeds of dog, and a person whose experience is such that he is incapable of distinguishing a dog from a wolf. D.L. adds a line of explanation by which the kind of expertise in question is that which distinguishes the assessment of a work of art by a proficient artist, a *technitēs*, i.e. someone who has been trained in the techniques involved in the production of such a work, from the assessment by someone who has no such training.⁶³ The first picks up on any number of details which the non-connoisseur is simply blind to. It is thus that, on the basis of the conceptions we have managed to acquire (with respect to both quantity of experience and degree of attention to detail), we are capable of applying our concepts in such a way as to articulate the content of our impressions in terms of a greater or lesser degree of precision. For example, from paucity of experience, and inattention to detail, it might be that we have a conception based on the similarity of a group of four-legged animals contra-distinguished from another group insofar as the first are canines, and the second felines. No further distinctions, hence no more detailed conceptions are available to us in this case. We will then only apply—because that is all we discern in our impression—the conception of a canine to articulate the content of the impression received from, say, the four-legged creature running up to us. If we have more informed experiences, we are likely to end up articulating the same impression in the form of the thing running up towards us being, say, a German Shepherd, rather than just a dog.

The contrast with the Epicureans is thus more subtle than a mere contention about the possibility of language's properly corresponding to the wealth of sense-perception. For the Stoics are not granting that there is a discrepancy between what we are impressed with, and what we then are reduced to articulate of it. We would thus depend on the conceptual baggage we have managed to put together, shoddy though this may be (e.g. calling a wolf a 'dog' only because we have no concept of a wolf). Rather they are saying that our rationalizing grasp of the world is such that we simply do not perceive

⁶³ Similar points in S.E. *M.* 7.252; Cic. *Acad.* 2.30–1 and 86. The bond between *empeiria*, being a *technitēs*, i.e. expertly trained, and reason-*logos* is a constant in Stoic doctrine, insofar as one becomes a *technitēs* through *empeiria* (which thus does not have the same connotations as our word 'experience'), where becoming expert is a question of being guided by reason-*logos*: thus the wise man is an expert in dialectic because he is 'experienced' (*empeiros*), i.e. he has *empeiria* and reasons according to this rationalized experience, D.L. 7.48 (and cf. 1.1.7 with n.56). The theory of *oikeiōsis*, or appropriation, by which we move away from the first impulse for self-preservation and towards desiring reason and acting according to reason, relies on reason-*logos* training us to become experts, *technites*, in what to have impulses towards, and what to shun, D.L. 7.86: *ῥατεχνίτης γὰρ οὗτος [logos] ἐπιγίνεται τῆς ὁρμῆς*, 'reason comes in addition as an expert influencing impulse'.

that of which we do not have a conception. The articulation into propositional form of our impressions is effectuated to our fullest decoding capacity, however inaccurate our conceptual baggage may be. Without a fine-grained enough conception, we do not perceive anything more than what is the content of our impression. Thus what is not there for us to perceive, is not there to be articulated in thought, and we are blind to details, just as the philistine is blind to the detail of workmanship behind a work of art. But we can become more expert through a constant application and refinement of our conceptions (through questioning them). For indeed, following the enjoinder from the *Placita*, we become more demanding about what is similar and what is dissimilar, moving thus from a conception of all four-legged canines being dogs, to distinguishing dogs from wolves, and then Labradors from German Shepherds, etc.

The Epicureans' suspicions about verbalization of impressions have their own endogenous grounding. In part, these are connected to the Epicurean theory of the origin of language, described as a gradual recognition by others, and thus a normalization, of a natural, 'private' (*'idia'/'idiōs'*) language, which is revelatory of a correspondence between an impression and sounds (Ep. Her. 75). It is also connected to the Epicurean diffidence about reason and reasoning (*logismos*), pinpointed as the source of falsity and misrepresentation of the truth of sense-impressions.⁶⁴ The contrast with the Stoics, in other words, is not in terms of the verbalization of impressions, but rather about the role of reason. Reason is an additional element, for the Epicureans, which brings something in addition to the impression, whereas for the Stoics it is the direct receptor of sense-data. For the Epicureans, reason 'interprets' (*'hermēneusa'* Ep. Her. 76) the sense-data. For the Stoics, reason decodes them by setting out the content of the impression in propositional form. Whether this propositional form can, or cannot, be expressed through language, and whether, if we have the conceptions, we automatically have the words for it, is a further question. For it is not words that we acquire when we acquire conceptions. We discern an order, however rudimentary. Hence the propositional articulation of impressions does not amount to a verbalization of their content. That this content could be expressed through words is a feature

⁶⁴ See Ep. Her. 39 on *logismos*, reasoning, which needs to be tied down to sense-perception, otherwise it leads to error, as described at Her. 50; see also Lucr. DRN 4.463–8. As to the origin of language, *logismos* is the weakest link in the introduction of words corresponding to the less immediately perceptible things, which only the happy few are aware of (the *'suneidotes'*), at Ep. Her. 76. For there are two methods: the one through compulsion to fit a sound to a thing, in a similar way to how the naming of things occurs in the generally accessible cases; the other proceeds on the basis of *logismos*, namely 'appealing to the best possible cause for calling [the thing] this way'. This is not the place to go into these Epicurean questions, but it is clear that Epicurus consistently treats reason as the most suspicious of the contributors to our reception and analysis of the world. See BRUNSCHWIG 1995e; ATHERTON 2005; REINHARDT 2008.

tightly connected, but still derivative on this first operation of reason. Thus, on the basis of a distinction between propositional form and speech, speech is derivative on reason, and not vice versa.

Setting out in this manner the requirements for a propositional content counters interpretations which tend to blur the distinction between rational and irrational impressions. It is time now to extend the discussion to the sole occupiers of the other branch of things signified: *lekta*.

2.2.6. *Lekta* and Impressions

We have so far distinguished an impression from its content and shown that if all impressions (rational and irrational) have a content, only in the case of the rational impressions does an operation of reason get triggered, so as to organize the content, rationally following a propositional articulation. This capacity, we have established, develops in us, rational beings, through experience. Now it is crucial for the view we shall continue to unfold in these pages to acknowledge that the operation of reason thus triggered is not a creative operation. It is not, that is, an operation which creates a content. It rather orders received content according to patterns absorbed and grasped through a constant practice of reaction to the world through *empeiria*-experience. It is a practice which leads the developing rational mind to attribute something to something, moulding the content of the impression according to a propositional articulation. An irrational animal, though subject to experiences as well, never achieves a level at which it can regularize the content of its impressions in this way. Hence there is room to distinguish between the experience of all sentient beings, and the *empeiria*-experience by which rational beings accumulate conceptions and thus perfect their reason in grasping the rational order they themselves are part of. The propositional content is thus not borne out of the mind, and is thus not dependent on the mind in the sense of creating it: rather it is an articulation rooted in reason which our own privileged access to reason enables us to latch onto.

But this view is at the heart of the controversy about *lekta*. For there is a description of *lekta* which sets out the terms of the relation between a *lekton* and an impression in a way which would seem to place *lekta* as ontologically dependent on impressions:

a *lekton* is that which subsists in accordance with a rational impression⁶⁵

⁶⁵ D.L. 7.63: 'λεκτόν εἶναι τὸ κατὰ φαντασίαν λογικὴν ὑφιστάμενον'; and parallel passage in S.E. M. 8.70: 'λεκτόν δὲ ὑπάρχειν φασὶ τὸ κατὰ φαντασίαν λογικὴν ὑφιστάμενον'. See also D.L. 7.43: 'καὶ τὸν μὲν τῶν σημαιομένων εἰς τε τὸν περὶ τῶν φαντασιῶν τόπον καὶ τῶν ἐκ τούτων ὑφισταμένων λεκτῶν', 'śemainomena divide between questions pertaining to impressions, and questions pertaining to *lekta* which subsist from them'.

On the basis of this description the *lekton* has been taken to be the ‘semantic correlate’ of the impression.⁶⁶ Two correspondences are thus formed: one between impressions and their capacity for verbalization, the other between rationality and communicability. *Lekta* are thus *de facto* taken for linguistic items: they are what is expressed by a meaningful sentence. At the same time, what is rational about a rational impression is that it is verbalized, hence communicable. A *lekton*, on this reading, is what is said, whenever we speak. This takes us back to the association of rational with verbal, which is here corroborated by the identification of the *lekton* as the guarantor of this association: being the communicable, verbal content of the impression.

On this interpretation, what is being described is not so much the *lekton*, whose linguistic role is somewhat taken as a given, but rather what rationality consists in. The answer is that it is a person’s capacity to communicate his or her thought. The *lekton* is thus considered as tied down to a person’s thought, and is the anchor point of the rationality of the impression. To all intents and purposes, the very existence or presence of *lekta* is dependent on a person’s having impressions in the first place. Since we do have impressions (necessarily so), there are *lekta*. Accordingly, the understanding of ‘subsists’, ‘*huphistamenon*’, is key. On this reading, *huphistamenon*, the present participle of the middle form ‘*huphistasthai*’, ‘to subsist’, in qualifying the *lekton*, is taken at its most literal: to characterize the *lekton* as something like the residue of a person’s impression.⁶⁷ Setting apart all that which makes a person’s impression his and no one else’s, what is left, the residue, is all that is expressible, communicable, in a person’s impression. That is the *lekton*. Proponents of this reading emphasize in particular one of the versions of the description which appears in D.L. 7.43, in a summary of the division of *sēmainomena*, the things signified (cf. n.65 above), where *lekta* are cursorily mentioned.⁶⁸

the *lekta* which subsist from them (i.e. impressions)⁶⁹

The focus, on this line of interpretation, is on the ‘*ek*’, ‘from’ in ‘subsist from’, which is taken literally to indicate that *lekta*, by subsisting *from* the impressions, are extracted from impressions.

This passage in D.L. is not on the same footing with the other relevant passages, in which there is no ‘from’. The other passages are more

⁶⁶ Cf. LONG & SEDLEY 1987 vol.1 p.200; also LONG 2006b p.242.

⁶⁷ It is a common usage in ancient Greek to use ‘*ὑφιστάμενον*’ to indicate precisely a residue or deposit: e.g. Herodotus (4.2.2) describing the Scythian process of producing cream by shaking milk: the residue is ‘*τὸ ὑφιστάμενον*’, what stays at the surface, in contrast, is ‘*τὸ ἐπιστάμενον*’; see also Arist. *Cael.* 4.4, 311a17–18 distinguishing between what is heavy, being ‘*ὑφιστάμενον*’, and thus sinks to the bottom, and what is light and which floats to the surface (‘*ἐπιπολάζον*’).

⁶⁸ See LONG 2006b pp.241–7.

⁶⁹ D.L. 7.43: ‘... τῶν ἐκ τούτων (i.e. φαντασιῶν) ὑφισταμένων λεκτῶν’.

authoritatively placed, since they are precisely reporting doctrine about rational impressions and *lekta*, rather than, as here in D.L. 7.43, summarizing an introductory and methodological set of divisions. Be this as it may, the passage deserves to be considered and has been commented on, especially in view of the paucity of texts. However, some work needs to be done to conciliate the ‘from’ in it with other passages. To do so, there needs to be some downplaying of the Greek. For in the other passages, we have the preposition ‘kata’ together with ‘huphistamenon’. And ‘kata’ (with the accusative) is not ‘ek’ (with the genitive), despite attempts to mould the former to a literal understanding of the latter.⁷⁰ For ‘kata’ (followed by the accusative), which we have already translated as ‘in accordance with’ above, consistently indicates something’s conformity with something distinct from it: e.g., typically, acting in accordance to the law (*‘kata tous nomous’*).⁷¹ Applied here to *lekta*, *lekta* are the distinct things from our thoughts, but are in accordance with our thoughts, like a good citizen’s behaviour with the law; an individual person is not dependent on the law for his or her existence. That a *lekton* subsists ‘in accordance with’ a rational impression is thus not the same as saying the *lekton* comes from, or derives, from the impression. It is distinct from the impression, and coincides with something relative to the impression, by being in accordance with it.

A rather more complex relation is thereby captured. For it indicates that the *lekton* has its own distinct, parallel or corresponding presence with respect to the impression. What the terms are, on which this relation of correspondence is established, is far from clear. However, distorting an unalienable trait of ‘kata’ for the sake of harmonizing the main source texts (which have the most authority for us in these matters) with a text which otherwise seems to jar with them, is not the preferable solution. Part of the problem is that the literature in question insists on reconciling the two groups of texts (the ‘kata’ texts and the one ‘ek’ text). For whereas ‘to subsist kata’, i.e. ‘in accordance with’, seems to indicate an ontological distinction, and even independence of the *lekton* from the impression, ‘ek’ would suggest the opposite. But the efforts expended on

⁷⁰ See in the wake of LONG 2006b, ALESSANDRELLI 2013 pp.68–9 who stands firm on the possibility of smoothing out the understanding of ‘ἐκ’ with ‘κατά’, appealing to LSJ for an entry for ‘ἐκ’ in the sense of ‘following from’, which is supposed to become an easy parallel with ‘κατά’ in the sense of ‘in accordance with’. Unfortunately Alessandrelli does not give any further references for this use. In checking LSJ, one indeed finds the entry referred to—: it is nuance 7 from the third big class of usages of the preposition as the marker of origin. Though LSJ suggest it is possible to translate ‘ἐκ’ by ‘in accordance with’, all the passages quoted to illustrate this usage clearly indicate that the preposition introduces that from which a direct result ensues: e.g. Herodotus 1.64 recounting how Peisistratus purified Delos in consequence (‘ἐκ’) of being told to do so by the oracles; or Xenophon *Cyr.* 2.2.21 on a politics of ‘rewarding people in consequence (‘ἐκ’) of their work’. These examples thus do not support the *rapprochement* sought for with ‘κατά’.

⁷¹ KÜHNER & GERTH vol.2 §607 with examples.

harmonizing the '*kata*' texts with the '*ek*' text are made with the intention of reaffirming the dependence of *lekta* on the soul as that which generates impressions.

There are at least two points to make, which go some way to vitiate these efforts. The first point is, as already suggested, that the text in which we find '*ek*' (D.L. 7.43) is not a doctrinal passage and belongs to the introductory presentation of D.L.'s book 7. Paragraphs 7.43–4 are a haphazard list of all the terms associated with dialectic, in which impressions are of course mentioned, but so are the constellation of notions associated with *lekta*, with no further specification about how they relate one to another, if at all. In short, it is difficult to put much weight on the '*ek*' here. The most we can gather from these lines is the extent of the topic on *lekta*.⁷² If there is any downplaying, therefore, it should surely be done in the other direction, recalibrating '*ek*' in the light of '*kata*'. The second point is that there is actually no need to consider that there is a problematic irreconcilability here in the first place. It is only a predisposed reading, one which assumes *lekta* are the verbalizations of our thoughts, and consequently borne in our mind, that imposes a contrast in which '*ek*' fits the bill and '*kata*' does not. For indeed, the more authoritative description, according to which *lekta* subsist 'in correspondence to' or 'in accordance with' ('*kata*') rational impressions, need not be taken as itself determining ontological dependence or independence. It makes, in fact, a more modest point, namely that there is a distinction between a *lekton* and a rational impression, between an impression and the content of that impression.

Not all *lekta* are *axiōmata*, but let us take the paradigmatic case of the *lekton* which is either true or false, the *axiōma* which we end up assenting to or rejecting (Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.9b.4). What the Stoics are concerned with is to identify the *lekton* as that which is true or false, and not the impression. That is to say, the crucial distinction is between the *lekton* and our thought. We know, from a number of passages in S.E., that this was a key point of contention. For S.E., in two of the most detailed passages we have of his discussion of *lekta*, begins by reporting a three-way dispute about what it is which is true or false: impressions themselves (roughly attributed to the Peripatetics), expressions (or voice, '*phōnē*', the Epicurean suggestion), or *lekta* (the Stoic answer).⁷³ That there is

⁷² See BARNES 1993 p.56 n.31 and SCHUBERT 1994 p.38, who dismiss the use of '*ἐκ*', putting it down to a general confusion in the texts of D.L. 7.43, and thus inconsequent and unreliable.

⁷³ S.E. *M.* 8.11 and 8.69–70; also 7.220. Impressions appear under the general tag of 'movements of the soul' (*κίνημα* or *κίνησις τῆς διανοίας*). At *M.* 8.13, S.E. dismisses the view that truth and falsity are in impressions themselves as '*σχολικῶς*', invented for the sake of argument, but at *M.* 7.220ff. he attributes it, in particular, to Peripatetic philosophers, where he reports that this kind of '*κίνημα*' is also called '*φαντασία*'; see SCHUBERT 1994 pp.42–6, referring to Aristotle's laconic remark on what it is for a verb to have signification in *Arist. Int.* 3, 16b20–1, as a possible source for this view. However, at *M.* 8.13, S.E. says that Strato (who was head of the Peripatetic

such a debate shows that the first step in accounting for the reality and role of *lekta*, for the Stoics, is to establish the distinction between *lekta* and impressions, and between *lekta* and expressions. That *lekta* therefore are marked out as ‘in correspondence with’ (*kata*) or ‘from’ (*ek*) first and foremost indicates the line of demarcation by which they are distinguished from the impressions. Both of these prepositions ensure that an impression is distinct from a *lekton*. There is, what is more, a conformity, or an accordance, of the *lekton* with the impression, insofar as the content of the impression, which is distinct from the impression, conforms with a *lekton*.

The first step thus consists in disentangling a fundamental confusion between the impression and its content. S.E. reports, at *M.* 8.12, that the *lekton* is:

that which we grasp, as that which subsists alongside our thought⁷⁴

The phrase reconfirms the separation between *lekta* and thought (i.e. the impression). It additionally marks out the separation at an ontological level: the *lekton* subsists alongside, or upon, thought—not as thought or in thought. Thus *lekta* correspond to the content of thoughts, they are not bound to thoughts, they have a mode of reality which runs parallel to the existence of thoughts. A characteristic of theirs is that they are accessible to our minds. And a characteristic of our minds is that they can latch onto and grasp *lekta*.⁷⁵ The use, in this last passage, of *‘paruphistamenon’* (‘subsisting alongside’) is but a more emphatic term for our already encountered *‘huphistamenon’* (‘subsisting’), a verb reserved, in the relevant contexts, for the description of incorporeals, such as *lekta*, distinguished from the existence of corporeals (see more at 3.1 below). The *‘para-’* prefix, more emphatically, sets out the terms of the parallel, but distinct, relation at an ontological level between a *lekton* and an impression.⁷⁶

school) thought that truth and falsity were in voice, *phōnē*. This view is also attributed by S.E. to Epicurus at *M.* 8.13 and *M.* 8.336, and is consonant with other reports, e.g. Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1119F–1120A.

⁷⁴ S.E. *M.* 8.12: ‘οὗ [...] ἀντιλαμβανόμεθα τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ παρυφισταμένῳ διανοίᾳ’.

⁷⁵ See SCHUBERT 1994 pp.30–7 on *‘παρυφιστάμενον’*, which is taken to indicate, first, the ‘availability’ of *lekta* as what is signified; this availability itself is then taken as an ontological marker, indicating the reality of *lekta*, which guarantees mutual understanding in communication.

⁷⁶ *‘para-’* contrasts with the use of the prefix *‘en-’* to indicate mind-dependent entities and activities. Thus D.L.7.46: the mind-born impressions are *‘ἐναπεσφραγισμένη’* and *‘ἐναπομεμαγμένη’* (impressed, imprinted, sealed onto) in the mind, or Galen *PHP* 2.5.20 quoting Chrysippus saying that speech (*logos*) and voice (*phōnē*) are *‘ἐνσημαίνεσθαι’* because they come from inside the heart (where the commanding principle of the soul (the *hēgemonikon*) is located). See also the same emphatic prefix used to describe all that relates to the mind-dependent conceptions *‘ἐννόημα’*, *‘ἐννοία’*, *‘ἐναπογράφεσθαι’*, *‘ἐναπόκεισθαι’* in Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B–C, as also Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1085A and Soll. *Anim.* 961C. On the *‘para-’* prefix as expressive, by contrast, of ontological separation, see Simplicius in *Cat.* 361.10–11 on place:

Thus the distinction between the content and the impression is bolstered by a category distinction. For the *lekton* to be the sort of thing accessible to thought and constituting the distinct content of impressions, its status in reality, i.e. its mode of reality, is distinct from that of the impression. The mind can grasp *lekta* because they subsist, and do not exist—and they subsist because they are incorporeal. *Lekta* are accessible to our minds, through our impressions, because they are not the same kind of thing as our minds. The latter are bodies, *lekta* are incorporeal. This distinction will be the subject-matter of most of the rest of this book: what does it mean to be incorporeal, and for that matter, corporeal? But for now, from the indications gathered so far, a first answer can be sketched out as to the nature of the relation of subsisting *lekta* to impressions, which are corporeal dispositions of the corporeal soul. Namely that it is unlikely that *lekta* are mind-dependent. First and foremost, because there would not be anything subsisting in accordance with thought, if that which subsists, the *lekton*, is formed in the mind in the first place. There is, in other words, an ontological distinction between a thought and a *lekton*. It is on the basis of this distinction that it is possible to have a rationalized content of our thoughts. The propositional form of the content of our impressions is thus not something we invent or create, each to the degree of his or her own capacities, it is something our rational minds shape us to grasp. It is something therefore distinct from us, and enabled by the subsisting status of *lekta*.⁷⁷

2.2.7. Why are Impressions and *Lekta* both *Sēmainomena*?

Both impressions and *lekta* are contrasted with *sēmainonta*, signifiers, which cover, as we saw, questions about speech, correct speech, and grammaticality. The latter are productive of signifying speech in a way in which neither impressions nor *lekta* are. Impressions are by their very nature passivities of the soul: they are ‘a passivity of ours’, contrasted to the soul’s ‘activities’ (impulse and assent).⁷⁸ This passivity is described by the Stoics in terms that emphasize first and foremost the passive reception from an active cause: thus

‘*παρυφίσταται τοῖς σώμασι*’, ‘subsists alongside bodies’; Stob. *Ecl.* 1.106.6–7: time ‘accompanies’ (*‘παρακολουθοῦν’*) the world’s motion’. These verbs do not suggest that *lekta*, space or time, subsist parasitically on the corporeal entities they are related to, namely impressions, bodies, cosmos, in these references, but rather that they are described in a different, parallel way from these. See SEDLEY in *CHHP* pp.399–401 *esp.* n.115. See further at 3.3.3 below.

⁷⁷ BARNES 1993 p.56 on the independence of *lekta* from ‘any particular thinking’; FREDE 1994a p.118.

⁷⁸ S.E. *M.* 7.237: ‘*ἡ φαντασία...πεῖσῖς τις ἡμετέρα [...] αὐται* (impulse, assent) *δὲ πολὺ μᾶλλον ἐνέργειαι*’, and further down, at S.E. *M.* 7.239–41: ‘*τῷ ὄρω δεῖν τῆς φαντασίας συνακούειν τὸ κατὰ πείσιν*’, ‘by impression must be understood that which is by way of passivity’.

Cleanthes speaks of impressions as ‘stamped onto the soul’ (*tupōsis*), Chrysippus of ‘the soul altered by way of passivity’.⁷⁹ Whether stamped on the soul, or an alteration to the soul, the Stoics insist that impressions are affections, which the soul receives as the result of entering into a relation with external, or in any case, distinct, impressors: for the impressions are ‘from what is the case, according to what is the case’.⁸⁰ That the impression actually conforms to this injunction, i.e. that it conforms with ‘what is the case’ (*to huparchon*) occurs when we have a *kataleptic* impression, as described above. Most of the time, however, our impressions fail to meet these standards, because an imprecise or flawed application of mental concepts damages our impressions ‘from within’. They then end up having little or nothing to do with reality.⁸¹ But however flawed their representation of reality is, impressions are the result of a relation to reality: that is, what lies at the basis of the formula ‘from what is the case, according to what is the case’. The soul is a sense-perceiver which is ‘somehow affected’ (*pōs pathousa*, S.E. M. 7.161–2) by something distinct from it. Paradigmatically, the Stoics fill in the indefiniteness of ‘somehow’ in terms of a causal relation, in which an external object produces the impression on the soul.⁸² But it is not the external thing, which is at the origin of an impression, that determines that impressions are passivities, but rather something inherent in the workings of the soul, by which having an impression is passive, compared to the triggering of impulse, or giving or withholding assent, which are the soul’s activities. At the same time, the emphasis on passivity does not seem sufficient to explain that impressions are a kind of *sēmainomenon*, a thing signified.

In most of the relevant texts, *sēmainomena* are mentioned as an explicative and more familiar alternative to the peculiar term ‘*lekton*’ (in these cases, the term ‘*pragma*’, ‘a thing’, is also often added).⁸³ What is more, in these passages *sēmainomena* are considered to be incorporeal since they are, or they are like,

⁷⁹ S.E. 7.240: ‘ἐτεροιοῦται κατὰ πείσιν’, discussed throughout M. 7.228–41; also D.L. 7.50.

⁸⁰ D.L. 7.50: ‘νοεῖται δὲ φαντασία ἢ ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντος κατὰ τὸ ὑπάρχον’: ‘an impression is conceived of as derived from what is the case, according to what is the case’. See also S.E. M. 7.248f.

⁸¹ S.E. 7.241: they are ‘internal affections’: ‘ἐν ἡμῖν πάθη’. See FREDE 1987d p.153f.; LESSES 1998 p.20ff.

⁸² S.E. M. 7.239–41 attacks the Stoics for the indefiniteness of the description of the causal history of an impression. The indefiniteness, however, is deliberate here, for not all impressions arise in the same way, and not all are conceived of as arising through causal agency—indeed, some arise in relation to *lekta*, which are what is communicated from one person to another, as discussed in detail in 4.4.1 below. The discussion here focuses on the content of impressions, and not on how they arise, so to avoid confusion the two questions are treated separately.

⁸³ Cf. S.E. M. 8.12: ‘σημαινόμενον πᾶν πᾶν καὶ λεκτόν’ (where ‘καί’ has an exegetical force: ‘a thing signified, i.e. a *lekton*’); see also S.E. M. 1.78–9; at D.L. 7.63 the list of what is to be found under *sēmainomena* is introduced as: ‘Ἐν δὲ τῷ περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων καὶ τῶν σημαινόμενων τόπῳ τέτακται ὁ περὶ λεκτῶν...’, ‘Under the topic of things and things signified are placed *lekta*...’ (different kinds of *lekta* are subsequently listed).

lekta. The topic of *sēmainomena* would thus appear to be a topic concerned with incorporeal items. But from their definition as stamped impressions on, or alterations of, the soul, it is clear that impressions, in corresponding to a certain state of the soul, cannot be incorporeal, but must be corporeal, as is the soul (D.L. 7.156). The presence of impressions under the topic of *sēmainomena* therefore seems all the more incongruous, given that they exist at a different ontological level from *sēmainomena*, which would seem more directly associated with *lekta*.

There are two ways to tackle this, following from the two lines of interpretation already sketched out: either there is no real distinction between impressions and *lekta*, or the terms of the distinction are complex, of which a further indication is this double application of '*sēmainomenon*' to impressions and *lekta*. We have already taken some steps towards depreciating the grounds for the first interpretation, and bolstering the reasons to inquire further into the second.

Defenders of the first view translate '*sēmainomena*' as 'significations' and take significations to be the cornerstone of the rationality which characterizes dialectic.⁸⁴ The rationality of impressions is taken as anchored to the correspondence, or interdependence (following Long's formulation), with *lekta*. The interdependence between impressions and *lekta*, on this reading, strictly binds impressions to language which thus 'reflects on what the world shows' (i.e. through the intermediary of the impressions). It follows that if impressions are to belong to one or the other topic, on 'utterance' (for *sēmainonta*) or on 'signification' (for *sēmainonema*), it will be to the latter. As we have already seen, this reading tends to dismiss the question of the ontological differences between *lekta* and impressions, claiming that D.L. does not mention the ontological differences in the presentation of the division of the parts of dialectic.⁸⁵ However, apart from the fact that *lekta*'s incorporeality (which implies their distinct ontological status as 'subsistents' in contrast to 'existing' corporeal entities) is abundantly attested, it is safe to say that D.L. is aware of it as well in his account. D.L. emphatically characterizes *phōnē* (voice or expression) as corporeal, referring specifically to 'expressions' ('*lexeis*') and the 'parts of speech' ('*merē tou logou*') at D.L. 7.55–8. Also his report marks impressions as corporeal states of the soul (at D.L. 7.45 and 7.50). In contrast, the way *lekta* are referred to, with the use of terms such as '*huphistamenon*', which we have already encountered, but also terms such as '*pragma*', which becomes specialized in this context, indicates that *lekta* are not the same kinds of items, at an ontological level, as the *phōnai* and expressions. A different vocabulary is thus required to talk about them.

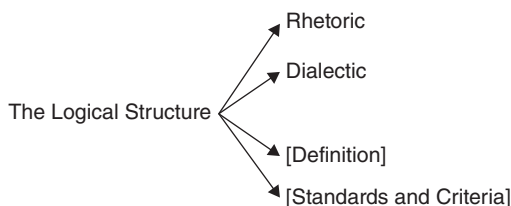
⁸⁴ LONG 2006b pp.246–7.

⁸⁵ LONG 2006b p.241.

If impressions and *lekta* are distinct, though both are kinds of things signified, either (i) there is a flaw, or incompleteness, in the account, or (ii) a *sēmainomenon* can be said in many ways. There is evidence in our texts for both types of answers. With regard to the first alternative, (i), the collocation of impressions under *sēmainomena* has been disputed, thereby revealing a fragility concerning the very notion of an impression and what it is supposed to cover as a topic-header.⁸⁶ However, these alternative configurations do not seem to have been mainstream. What is, by contrast, a mainstream practice amongst the Stoics is that of duplicating heading and sub-heading terms when it comes to categorizing. The second alternative, (ii), therefore must assume that there is a reason why most Stoics agree that an impression is a kind of *sēmainomenon*. They thus understand that when *lekta* are then interchangeably indicated as *sēmainomena*, this corresponds to a stricter, more specialized or differently specialized application of the notion of a *sēmainomenon* than when an impression is said also to be a *sēmainomenon*. Thus it is not so much the notion of an impression which must be re-evaluated, but rather the notion of a *sēmainomenon* which must be further analysed.

2.2.7.1. Alternative Configurations of the Logical Structure

The alternative configurations of the logical structure of philosophy, mentioned cursorily in D.L. 7.41, must be taken as attempts at capturing a web of relations which is not present in the dominant configuration we have focused on so far. The underlying question is whether everything relating to the logical structure is brought out by the division into dialectic and rhetoric. At close inspection, what seems to have been at the heart of the contention is the role of impressions. As we have already seen, the configuration of the logical structure is as shown again in Figure 2.4.



Map of the Logical Structure 2.4

⁸⁶ LONG 2006b pp.246–7 talks of an ‘apparent ambivalence in the way the concept [of impressions] is positioned’ but resolves the ambivalence in referring to the ‘two faces’ of impressions: as stamped on the soul on the one hand, and as the touchstone of rationality on the other.

The bracketed words are alternative suggestions which concern questions pertaining to impressions, though this might not be obvious at first glance. Both deal with determining truth. The topic on definition is a 'recognition of the truth', and the topic on standards and criteria is 'a discovery of the truth'.⁸⁷ Definitions proceed 'thanks to conceptions' (*dia ennoion*) whilst standards and criteria consist in discriminating between different impressions. But conceptions are constituted by accumulated impressions, and indeed are 'a kind of impression'.⁸⁸ So questions concerning definition, such as those concerning standards and criteria, are devoted to a classification of impressions.⁸⁹ Both topics thus focus on the discriminatory role of impressions—discriminatory, that is, between truth and falsehood. This is so directly with the standards and criteria, indirectly with definitions through conceptions, which presuppose their acquisition through impressions. The Stoics who insist on making explicit the role of impressions as the criteria, or at least as the basis for the criterion for truth and falsehood,⁹⁰ consider that this contribution is neither present nor capable of being deduced from the characterization of impressions as *sēmainomena*. It follows that, for the dissident Stoics who promote these added topics, what is contained in the notion of a thing signified is not associated with truth or falsehood.

There are no indications that, on these alternative schemata, the topic about impressions is removed from under *sēmainomena*. But impressions are not mentioned when, at D.L. 7.63, we read a fuller list of items found under 'the questions concerned with things, i.e. signified things' which correspond to the *sēmainomena*, duly distinguished from the *sēmainonta*, signifiers (see n.83 above). So, at least for some Stoic thinkers, a topic devoted to impressions as a kind of *sēmainomenon* is unable to deal with all of the questions related

⁸⁷ D.L. 7.42: definition is 'τὸ ὀρικὸν πρὸς ἐπίγνωσις τῆς ἀληθείας', whilst standards and criteria are 'πρὸς τὸ τὴν ἀλήθειαν εὐρεῖν'.

⁸⁸ See Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1084F–1085A: 'φαντασία γάρ τις ἡ ἐννοιά ἐστί', 'the conception is a kind of impression'; Ps-Galen *Def. Med.* 381.12–13: 'ἐπινόιά ἐστιν ἐναποκειμένη νόησις, νόησις δὲ λογικὴ φαντασία' (for our present purposes, *epinoia* is interchangeable with *ennoia*): 'a conception is a thought registered into our soul, a thought is a rational impression'; see also Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B: 'each conception is written into (*ἐναπογράφεται*) our soul'; S.E. *M.* 7.224 on conceptions being generalizations over a cluster of impressions.

⁸⁹ D.L. 7.41 notes that the topic on definitions is dismissed by some, for whom the addition of the topic on standards and criteria is enough. In effect, standards and criteria are often directly linked with conceptions, suggesting that, at least according to some Stoics, conceptions are fully involved in the relevant discussions: see Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1083C: 'κανόνες τῶν ἐννοιῶν' ('standards by way of conceptions') or Epict. *Diss.* 2.11.15–19 who, in positing the necessity for some standards of truth ('κανόνα τινα') appeals to the use of *προλήψεις*, preconceptions, which are a specific kind of conception.

⁹⁰ Cf. D.L. 7.54; S.E. *M.* 7.153 and 7.227. See FREDE in *CHHP* p.317 on the shift in understanding of the term 'criterion'; STRIKER 1996b p.53ff., ANNAS 1980 p.98ff. on the difficulties of pinpointing what precisely plays the role of a criterion of truth.

otherwise to impressions, which by and large, correspond to questions of epistemology.

The difficulty lies with the proximity to *lekta*. The flaw some Stoics discern is presumably that impressions considered as *sēmainomena* are necessarily considered in relation to *lekta*. For as *sēmainomena*, the focus is on the correspondence between impressions and *lekta*, whereas aspects concerning the role of impressions and conceptions in determining the conditions of truth or falsity are left out. For the question of truth and falsity is different from the true or false *lekton* corresponding to the content of an impression. A true *lekton* is an incorporeal, the truth is corporeal (as mentioned in 1.1.7 above with nn.50 and 51). This duplicating solution is thus not far from the ‘double-faced’ characterization of impressions suggested by Long (cf. n.86 above). The solution for these Stoics is to separate the different roles of impressions, considered thus under different guises: in relation to *lekta* on the one hand, as corporeal constituents of the truth on the other.

But we can see why this did not become the mainstream solution. First and foremost because duplicating by way of separation of roles does not conform to Stoic practice (which rather moves from a broader to a stricter understanding of a term), nor is it particularly convincing or helpful. For splitting in two the contributions made by impressions to the logical structure of the Stoic *systema* does not help us understand how impressions function in these two distinct roles. In particular, it does not solve the question of how a corporeal soul, which is impressed by something, should have, corresponding to it, in accordance with it, an incorporeal *lekton*. To all intents and purposes, it seems that the dissident Stoics in question were rather avoiding the main problem than offering a real solution. For the correspondence of impressions to *lekta* is left as a blind spot in the account. The alternative suggestion thus alerts us to where the problem lies but ultimately fails to solve it.

2.2.7.2. *The Sēmainomenon is Said in Many Ways*

There is a second possible answer to the question why impressions are *sēmainomena*, by inquiring not so much about the relation of impressions to *lekta*—which runs the risk of begging the question—but rather about what being a *sēmainomenon*, a thing signified, comes down to.

It is one of the Stoics’ innovations to have established a strict distinction between the signifiers and things signified. When we first mentioned the distinction, we were concerned with the main division of the topic of dialectic into these two sub-topics. But with the further division of *sēmainomena* it is necessary to refine the previous comments. A *sēmainomenon* is that which has a corresponding *sēmainon* which signifies it. For a *sēmainon* always signifies, or expresses, a *sēmainomenon*. Furthermore, it is the case that a *lekton* is what is signified by an appropriate, corresponding expression and so, to all intents

and purposes, a *lekton* coincides with a *sēmainomenon*. This is the basic reason why the Stoics introduce the *lekton* as a *sēmainomenon*: it is signified because an appropriate expression signifies something, and what is thereby signified is the *lekton*. A *lekton*, accordingly, can be considered as a *sēmainomenon* but only in certain cases, namely when it is expressed by a signifying expression. It is not, however, the grounding characteristic of a *lekton* to be expressed by a *sēmainon*. Rather, for *lekta*, being expressed is fundamentally optional; they are that which can be said, but also cannot be said. Thus the *sēmainomenon* is a *lekton* as long as a *lekton* is actually expressed, for then what is signified by the expression is the *lekton*. But if a *lekton* remains unsaid, or unexpressed, then an unexpressed *lekton* can no longer be identified with a *sēmainomenon*. A *lekton* might never be said. We can presume that there are myriads of *lekta* there, ready to be said, which will never be expressed.⁹¹

In addition, and most importantly, when coinciding with *sēmainomena*, *lekta* do so only with a certain kind of *sēmainomenon*. For not all *sēmainomena* are *lekta*, though all *sēmainomena* have corresponding signifiers. It follows that not all signifiers express *lekta*. Some do not. This is the great change, which Alexander, for instance, highlights, between Aristotle and the Stoics: for the Stoics, there is a correspondence between signifiers and *sēmainomena* such that an alteration in choice of words and grammatical construction determines a difference in the *sēmainomenon* thereby signified. The Stoics ‘attend to and follow the expressions (*lexeis*), and not the things signified (*sēmainomena*)’.⁹² What Alexander means by this comment is not that the Stoics pay attention only to surface grammar, but that they take the surface grammar to reflect changes at the level of the *sēmainomenon*, in such a way that alterations in surface grammar pick out different *sēmainomena*. As such, *sēmainomena* are first and foremost bound to *sēmainonta*. It is thus not surprising that *sēmainomena* do not always coincide with incorporeal *lekta*, because there are signifiers which do not signify *lekta*. Some parts of speech, for instance, individually, do not. Thus nouns and proper names are signifiers, *sēmainonta*, of qualities, common and individual respectively (D.L. 7.58). But qualities are bodies.⁹³ They are the qualified state of a body: ‘that by which

⁹¹ On the modality inherent in the notion of a *lekton* see FREDE 1994a p.110.

⁹² Alex. in An. Pr. 373.29–31, in contrast to Aristotle: ‘οἱ δὲ νεώτεροι ταῖς λέξεσιν ἐπακολουθοῦντες οὐκέτι δὲ τοῖς σημαινόμενοις οὐ ταῦτόν φασί γίνεσθαι ἐν ταῖς εἰς τὰς ἰσοδυναμοῦσας λέξεις μεταλήψεσι τῶν ὄρων’, ‘the more recent thinkers follow the form of expression and not the things signified, saying that in changing the terms in formulations which are equivalent, something different results’. The ‘more recent thinkers’ are the Stoics who consider difference in formulation, a difference in the kind of proof in question, as noted earlier in the same text, at Alex. in An. Pr. 84.12–14 where a change in formulation changes a syllogism into what is termed a ‘subsyllogism’: see D.L. 7.79–80; Galen *Inst. Log.* 19.6; BARNES et al. 1991 p.53 n.63. See also FREDE 1987f p.102f.; BARNES 2007 p.181f.

⁹³ Sen. *Ep.* 106.3ff. and 117.2–15; Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1085E and *Virt. Mor.* 441C; Ps-Galen *Qual. Incorp.* 476.11–12.

each body is differentiated', as in Simplicius (*in Cat.* 212.15ff.).⁹⁴ In this passage Simplicius analyses the Stoic account of quality (*poiotēs*) as always bound to a thing qualified (a *poios* (agreeing with the person) if it is a human, e.g. the glutton or the wise man, or a *poion* (neuter) for a thing, e.g. the hand insofar as it is extended). It is this state which the noun, or appellation (*prosēgoria*) signifies (e.g. the noun 'glutton', which signifies the state a person is in). In this light, what is signified, the *sēmainomenon*, need not necessarily be an incorporeal *lekton*, but may be a corporeal thing, like a quality.⁹⁵

Impressions are themselves qualitative states of the soul: they are the soul stamped or altered or moved in a certain way—a way which makes one impression different from any other.⁹⁶ The impression is then what the Stoics call a 'memory-trace' of a quality.⁹⁷ As such, it is something which is signified by a signifier, e.g. the word 'white'. Is this a good enough explanation of why impressions are also *sēmainomena*, though distinct from *lekta*? It is an explanation which relies on an underdetermined account of a *sēmainomenon*, considered insofar as it is bound to a *sēmainon*. There are thus various kinds of *sēmainomena*, both corporeal and incorporeal. The Stoics are, in any case, not suggesting that the content of an impression becomes itself qualified by the quality it has been impressed by. We do not have red in our eyes or middle C in our ears, as Myles Burnyeat famously characterized Aristotle's account of perception.⁹⁸ The impression we have, based on the memory-trace left by something white, is itself not white, for the Stoics. To avoid such confusion, Chrysippus corrects Cleanthes' too literal description of the impressed soul: not 'being stamped' but rather 'being altered'.⁹⁹

The root of the notion of a *lekton* is not something signified, but something said—from the verb '*legein*' from which the verbal adjectival form '*lekton*' is derived. The notion of a *sēmainomenon* is bound to that of a *sēmainon*, but the notion of *lekton* is not. It is thus not redundant to speak of a *lekton* as a *sēmainomenon lekton*. The juxtaposition is informative both with regard to the

⁹⁴ Another way of putting it is in Galen, *Elem.* 470.3–4, for example, in reference to prime matter whose characteristic is to be 'unqualified' (D.L. 7.134) but which, through the activity of the active principle, comes to be something through the coming to be and subsequent withdrawing (*ginomenon* and *apoginomenon*) of quality (*poiotēs*), enabling things to be differentiated by way of their being qualified bits of matter.

⁹⁵ On qualities and their signifiers see 9.2 below.

⁹⁶ D.L. 7.50; S.E. *M.* 7.228–31; Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900E.

⁹⁷ S.E. *M.* 7.219–20: 'ὅπερ μνήμη τε καὶ φαντασία καλεῖται παρ' αὐτοῖς, μνήμη μὲν τοῦ περὶ τὴν αἴσθησιν πάθους, φαντασία δὲ τοῦ ἐμποιήσαντος τῇ αἰσθήσει τὸ πάθος αἰσθητοῦ', 'this is what they call a memory-trace and an impression: a memory-trace of the affection left by the perception, and an impression of the sensible object which has produced the affection in our perception'. See also Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B mentioned already on the development of reason as the gradual accumulation of impressions, starting from these memory-traces.

⁹⁸ BURNYEAT 1992.

⁹⁹ The discussion on this point, already mentioned here, is presented in detail in S.E. *M.* 7.228–31 and D.L. 7.50.

kind of *sēmainomenon* it indicates and the *lekton*, which is a *lekton* to which we have access, through the availability of a known and uttered signifier.¹⁰⁰ As we shall find out in chapter 5, ‘to say’ (*legein*) is developed by the Stoics in a direction which takes it away from the signifier-thing signified pair, though it may sometimes coincide with it. What is important at this stage of our inquiry is to acknowledge that impressions, being *sēmainomena*, do not commit the Stoics to identify impressions with *lekta*.

We are now able to distinguish between impressions which are states of the soul, signifying expressions and what is signified. *Lekta* are none of these and yet closely connected to all of these items. An inquiry into the role and nature of *lekta* therefore requires that we analyse that connection. For the real challenge for the Stoics is to account for how corporeal souls are supposed to ‘think of *lekta*’.¹⁰¹ The correspondence of the content of our impressions with *lekta* is the grounding marker of our capacity to grasp *lekta*. That is what makes us rational, capable of thinking, and capable thus of improving, where improving consists in understanding the structure of the world. That this is supposed to occur through our grasping of *lekta* is a further indication that *lekta* are the keystones to that structure.

¹⁰⁰ As discussed in 2.1 above, knowledge of the parts of speech which also covers knowledge of how they combine plays a role in the acquisition of knowledge of the rational order of the world as it guarantees an ever greater access to the *lekta* which are there to be said and uttered.

¹⁰¹ The phrase is from BRUNSCHWIG 1995c p.252.

Bodies and Incorporeals

In order to understand what kind of relation our corporeal souls have with incorporeal *lekta*, we must look at what it means for the Stoics to say of something that it is a body, and hence what it is not to be one.

3.1. BEING A BODY

On Stoic doctrine, everything which exists is corporeal, and only what is corporeal exists—one of the more famous tenets of Stoicism.¹ But hardly any of our available texts actually provides us with a clear formulation of the tenet. It is mainly in critical texts, attacking the Stoics, that the claim is expressed in this manner.² Nor can the use of the verb ‘to be’ (*einai*), when referring to bodies, be taken to have clear doctrinal purport.³ For though the Stoics have recourse to specialized terminology to mark differences in ontological status or modes of reality, this vocabulary does not so much contrast being (*einai*) with other modes. The precise terminology rather helps to determine the ontological status itself. The Stoics thus, in certain contexts, use verbs such as *huparchein* (to obtain) or *huphestanai* (to subsist) to indicate a particular mode of reality which is indeed different from the mode of being of bodies. It is a use which constitutes an important doctrinal element regarding the status of incorporeals in ontology.⁴ But a rigorous contrast

¹ SEDLEY in *CHHP* p.383f., GOURINAT 2009.

² E.g. Plot. *Enn.* 6.1.25f., Alex. in *Top.* 301.20–302.2. HAHM 1977 pp.3, 9, 25 n.26 therefore speaks of the need for a ‘reconstruction’ of the Stoic view.

³ True enough, we find the use of ‘to be’ in relevant definitions: e.g. D.L. 7.134: ‘there are (*einai*) two principles in the world’; should we conclude the principles are corporeal because of this use? Other reasons corroborate that conclusion (as discussed by Aristocles *apud* Euseb. *PE* 15.14.1.2–3, and see n.40 below). D.L. 7.136 reports: ‘body is (*esti*) that which is extended in three ways’; is ‘is’ doctrinally significant? Unlikely, since here it is the three-dimensional extension which defines a body.

⁴ We have already seen ‘*huphistamenon*’ used to refer to *lekta* which are incorporeal (2.2.6 above); see also variations, still referring to *lekta*: ‘καθεστηκέναι’, ‘συνιστάναι’ at S.E. *M.* 8.406–10.

between these specialized uses and the use of *einai* (to be) is very much absent from our mostly doxographical sources. Though bodies are not, for the most part, described as obtaining or subsisting,⁵ it is often the case that incorporeals are said 'to be', *einai*, where the *einai* clearly has no doctrinal weight: thus at D.L. 7.65–6, the different kinds of *lekta* (*axiōmata*, commands, questions, etc.) are all described as 'being', '*esti*', such and such.⁶ The use of '*einai*' therefore is not a sufficient indication of ontological status, but often corresponds to a common, non-technical and, in some cases, loose way of speaking.

It is thus not on the basis of terminology that the status of body can be properly gauged. There is rather a series of ontological implications to be accounted for, which underlie the Stoic claim of identity between corporeality and existence.⁷

3.1.1. Body as Active and Passive

The Stoics have a distinctive view about what a corporeal item is, or at least at a first stage, about what it does, namely just this: that it does, that it acts (*poioun*):

For '*huparchein*' see S.E. *M.* 1.157, 8.100, 8.262, and many other instances. For place (*topos*), another kind of incorporeal, '*παρυφίσταται*' in Simplicius in *Cat.* 361.10–11; '*huparchein*' and '*huphestanai*' for time and *katēgorēmata*, a kind of *lekton*, in Stob. *Ecl.* 1.8.42.37–43. See on the specialized use of these verbs BRUNSCHWIG 1988 p.23, FREDE 1994a p.116f., and GOLDSCHMIDT 1972 who emphasizes the contrast both verbs mark, on Stoic doctrine, with verbs expressing existence and which qualify beings, but argues against a systematic distinction between the two verbs themselves, in contrast, on this last point, to HADOT 1969. These are a cluster of anticipatory references to a question which will concern us to a greater extent in chapters 6 and 7).

⁵ But there are many texts in which '*huparchein*' is used in reference to bodies as well, e.g. D.L. 7.156: the corporeal soul 'is perishable', '*φθαρτὴν ὑπάρχει*'. Here '*huparchei*' is used as a substitute for '*einai*', which is in effect used immediately afterwards. Ps-Galen *Qual. Incorp.* 476.14, also 477.3, explicitly mentioning the Stoics, uses '*huparchei*' many times with 'body' as the subject. Clement, reporting Stoic views about corporeal causes, often says that they '*huparchei*', e.g. at *Strom.* 8.9.33.7–8 and also the parallel passage in *Strom.* 1.20.99.2. There are therefore certain contexts in which a specialized usage is evident, but we must proceed with caution.

⁶ It is worth noting that the parallel report in S.E. *M.* 8.71–3 is more careful about this, and does not use '*esti*'. The lack of proper 'legislation' on the use of 'being' is precisely the point Alexander highlights in *in Top.* 301.22–4: had the Stoics 'had a legislation' ('*nomothetēsantes*') that being (*on*) should qualify only bodies, they would have had less difficulty in positing the 'something' (*ti*) as what is more generic, covering both existing bodies and subsisting incorporeals (on the 'something' see 3.2.4 below).

⁷ The task requires a cautious gleaning of information from different sources, hence the prudence expressed in BRUNSCHWIG 1988's formulation, at the beginning of p.21: 'Un ensemble de textes concordants attribuent aux Stoïciens une doctrine...' expounding a variety of tenets concerning the Stoic ontological framework, building up to the conclusion that existence is exclusive to bodies.

because everything which acts is a body.⁸

It is furthermore part of the Stoic view about bodies that it is bodies which are acted upon (*paschon*). In the relevant passages, it is in particular as an acting item, as the ‘*quidquid facit*’ to use Seneca’s formula (*Ep.* 117.2) that body is characterized. Indeed, in most of our passages only the active role of body is referred to. When the passivity, or the capacity for passivity of a body is additionally mentioned, it is always in conjunction with the activity, or capacity for it, of body:

Some [the Stoics] say that body is that which is capable of acting or being acted upon.⁹

That is to say, body is never only said to be acted upon, or able to be acted upon, without its capacity to act being mentioned as well, such that the body’s capacity to be affected is a corollary counterpart of the definition of body as acting or being capable of acting.

Most of the texts in which both the active and passive capacity of body are spoken of are texts which actually focus on the characteristics of those items which lack these features, and which therefore are not bodies: the incorporeals (*asōmata*). The incorporeals are neither active nor passive, nor do they have the capacity to be either.¹⁰ That this capacity should be the discriminating feature which makes the one kind of thing a body, and the other an incorporeal, indicates that the most distinctive feature about body, for the Stoics—judging by the particular emphasis given to it in our sources—is that it is body, and only body, which acts. Moreover, the negative characterization of the incorporeals as incapable of activity or passivity underlines the way the bodies are considered to be active: precisely in the way an incorporeal cannot possibly be conceived of, namely as capable of contact. Thus passive matter is touched (*thichthēnai*) by that which acts, and cannot be incorporeal, since that which is incorporeal cannot be touched:

that which acts must touch the matter being acted upon, in order to act; and the matter being acted upon must be touched, in order to be acted upon. Now the incorporeal is not of such a nature as to touch or be touched.¹¹

⁸ D.L. 7.56: ‘πάν γὰρ τὸ ποιῶν σῶμά ἐστι’; see also Cic. *Acad.* 1.39; Sen. *Ep.* 117.2.

⁹ S.E. *PH.* 3.38: ‘σῶμα τοίνυν λέγουσιν εἶναι τινες ὃ οἶόν τε ποιῆν ἢ πάσχειν’. Similarly at S.E. *M.* 9.366. See Cic. *Acad.* 1.39: ‘... nec vero aut quod efficeret aliquid aut quod efficeretur posse esse non corpus’, ‘neither what acts, nor what is acted upon can be non-corporeal’; see also Aristotle, quoted by Eusebius at *PE* 15.14.1 (chapter devoted to Zeno on the principles): ‘body is what acts and is acted upon’.

¹⁰ S.E. *M.* 8.263: ‘τὸ γὰρ ἀσώματον κατ’ αὐτοὺς οὔτε ποιῆν τι πέφυκεν οὔτε πάσχειν’, ‘the incorporeal, according to them, is not of a nature either to act or be acted upon’, also S.E. *M.* 8.407–8.

¹¹ S.E. *M.* 9.216–17: ‘τό τε γὰρ ποιῶν θιγεῖν ὀφείλει τῆς πασχούσης ὕλης, ἵνα ποιήσῃ, ἢ τε πάσχουσα ὕλη θιχθῆναι ὀφείλει, ἵνα πάθῃ, τὸ δὲ ἀσώματον οὔτε θιγεῖν οὔτε θιχθῆναι πέφυκεν’. It is

The fundamental feature of body, which is to act or be acted upon, thus relies on a further characteristic of body, namely that it be the sort of thing which touches or is touched. This is the condition for a body to realize its fundamental feature, of acting or being acted upon. The two first clauses in the passage end similarly with a consecutive formula: 'in order to act' and 'in order to be acted upon'. These are the key indicators of what the order is, which determines the nature of body. For the Stoics haul in the possibility of being touched and touching as a back-up requirement for what is the main feature, which is the body's acting or being acted upon. The physical structure thus comes to support the logical relation bodies are framed in. What is thereby further corroborated is that passivity is the correlated feature of body. For it follows that acting upon, requiring contact, requires in addition that the patient be receptive of contact. Passivity is thus also the distinguishing mark of the body.

The view is extended by Tertullian (*An.* 5.6) to the Epicureans, as he quotes a line from Lucretius:

no other thing but a body can touch and be touched¹²

This line is also quoted by Seneca (at *Ep.* 106.8–9), who refers explicitly to Lucretius all the better to set out the broadest possible consensus, from Epicureans to Stoics, on what a body is: 'there is no doubt (*'numquid est dubium'*), he says that nothing but a body can be in contact with, i.e. touch (*'tangere'*), something else and nothing but a body can be touched'. Seneca brings in this quote from Lucretius after having spent the first half of *Letter* 106 presenting the Stoic arguments for the body as that which is either active or passive. He proves in that first half that virtues and vices are corporeal states of the soul, which act on the soul and corresponding body (e.g. by making it blush, or adding sparkle to the eyes, etc., see *Ep.* 106.5–7). The appeal therefore to the physical character of body as touchable, as a last addition to the discussion, is done by way of a back-up corroboration, rather than as the main tenet to argue for. Indeed, explicitly quoting Lucretius is a way to signal that this physical description is shared and evident, whereas the Stoic account is specific to the school, and does not in fact rely on this feature as a premiss in the argumentation.

When Tertullian considers the Stoics and the Epicureans together as fundamentally thinking of body in terms of what touches and is touched, he is

an argument which in other texts is originally attributed to Cleanthes, in particular as proof of the corporeality of the soul, claiming that only bodies *'συμπάσχει'*, 'sympathize' (i.e. are acted upon conjointly) with other bodies, see Nemesius *Nat. Hom.* 2.21.6–7, Tertullian *An.* 5.4; going by Tertullian's testimony (at *An.* 5.4–6), it is Chrysippus who generalized Cleanthes' argument about the soul, extending it to contact between all that is corporeal; on sympathy for the Stoics see also 1.3.5 above.

¹² Lucr. *DRN* 1.304: 'tangere enim et tangi nisi corpus nulla potest res'.

doing nothing more than picking up on a tradition in which the presumed consensus about body as touchable has been raised to the status of doctrine. A doctrine according to which the Stoics and the Epicureans together are proponents of materialism, that is, in the first instance, defenders of the radically anti-Platonic view that what is real is the opposite of the Platonic Ideas, namely what is touchable and alterable—hence material.¹³ In this light, there are grounds to speak of a Hellenistic notion of contact through bodies.¹⁴ But this is also due, on the one hand, to a tendency to simplification by the doxographers, who help forge stark distinctive (if somewhat caricatural) marks of this or that school of thought. On the other hand, the tradition is also fuelled by strategies such as the one employed by Seneca. For in order to make more palatable a Stoic account which ends up showing that virtues and vices are bodies, Seneca (as we have just seen) makes a general appeal to a consensus shared with rival schools of thought as an additional means of persuasion. The consensus, however, remains merely at the surface, for the very notion of contact through bodies has a different force for the two Hellenistic schools.

The Stoics, true enough, share with the Epicureans a certain definition of body as ‘that which has three dimensions with the added feature of offering resistance (*‘meta antitupias’*)’.¹⁵ Through resistance, there is contact. However, the emphasis on resistance serves different purposes in each case: for Epicurus, resistance enables us to distinguish body from void.¹⁶ It makes one atom collide with another in the case of an encounter between two resistance-endowed atoms.¹⁷ Thus contact, on the Epicurean view, is a collision which has the sole consequence of setting the atoms, which are always in motion, in a

¹³ See Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1114F, 1116B–E, most explicitly grouping together the Stoics and the Epicureans as materialists because anti-Platonists, i.e. denying the existence of immaterial Ideas. See also Plot. *Enn.* 6.1.25.22–3 for the Stoics’ ‘existence comes to the other things from matter’. See RUSSELL 2004 part III on the traditional view of the Stoics as materialists. On this tradition see HAHM 1977 p.5ff.; SHARPLES 1996 *esp.* pp.33–4.

¹⁴ In a text such as Tertullian’s *De Anima*, with its strong ideological incentive to refute the pagan philosophies (cf. *An.* 1.2) and which follows a standard rhetorical procedure of exposition (cf. T. D. BARNES 1985 pp.206–7), the grouping of two main Hellenistic schools, in a more or less chronological section compiling the views of different philosophers (from Heraclitus to Epicurus and the Stoics), is a sign of the originality of the claim with respect to the other, preceding and rival schools they are pitted against. See also, on the grouping of the Epicureans and Stoics on the grounds of their supposed materialism, HAHM 1977 *esp.* the conclusive point at p.14.

¹⁵ S.E. *PH* 3.46 and *M.* 10.12 where the definition is attributed to the Dogmatists; at *M.* 10.240, 10.257 and 11.226, the definition is attributed to Epicurus in particular, and at Plot. *Enn.* 6.1.20 to the Stoics. It is a definition which comes from geometry, and indeed is said to ‘belong to the mathematicians’ (cf. S.E. *M.* 1.21; Plot. *Enn.* 6.1.20). See also the way the definition is summed up in D.L. 7.135 as ‘this is also called solid body’, ‘*στερεὸν σώμα*’, where the term for ‘solid’ is the term used for a geometrical body as it is defined at the beginning of book 11 (the first book on solid geometry) of Euclid’s *Elements*.

¹⁶ S.E. *M.* 1.21, 1.156, 10.221–2. See more on Epicurean physics at 6.4.3 below.

¹⁷ S.E. *M.* 10.223; Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1111E.

more or less deviated direction.¹⁸ For the Stoics, resistance corroborates the capacity for activity of bodies, since offering resistance is doing something, namely doing something to another body whose resistance is thus overpowered. The contact between two resistance-endowed bodies thus consists in the meeting of two bodies such that the one acts on the other.¹⁹

It is in this sense that the passivity, or the capacity for it, of body is described as the corollary counterpart of a body's capacity for activity: for the Stoic claim about the activity of body both implies and relies on the body's being, accordingly, the only item also capable of receiving the effect of the action of a body. Though the capacity for passivity of bodies may be less emphasized in our texts, it is no less crucial a part of the Stoic theory that bodies are also the items capable of being acted upon, precisely because their resistance is overpowered or kept at bay.

3.1.2. On a Doxographical Tradition of the Passivity of Body

It may seem that, in taking body as that which is capable of passivity, the Stoics follow a certain philosophical tradition, which spreads across the board of philosophical schools: that of considering body, or what is corporeal,²⁰ as the appropriate item to be acted upon or capable of being acted upon.²¹ It is a tradition typically passed down to us by the doxographers who fix the starting point and inspiration for it in Plato's *Timaeus*, drawing up a certain history of

¹⁸ Ep. Her. 43: 'κινούνταί τε συνεχῶς αἱ ἄτομοι τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ αἱ μὲν εἰς μακρὰν ἀπ' ἀλλήλων διῤυστάμεναι, αἱ δὲ αὖ τὸν παλμὸν ἰσχουσιν', 'the atoms are in continual motion through all eternity; and some are displaced to a great distance one from another, while others merely oscillate in one place'.

¹⁹ Iamblichus, quoted by Simplicius in Cat. 302.30–1, insists on the Stoics' assimilation of acting with touching: 'οὐδὲ τοῖς Στωϊκοῖς συγχωρεῖν [...] ὡς τὸ ποιῶν πελάσει τινὶ ποιεῖ καὶ ἄψει', 'we do not agree with the Stoics [...] for whom what is active acts by being close and by contact'.

²⁰ Recourse to talk of what is corporeal (σωματικόν) instead of bodies (σώματα) flattens out doctrinal views about a definite and unanimous understanding of a notion of body: it covers thus for example Empedocles' four elemental stuffs, the 'σωματικὰ τέτταρα' (Arist. Gen. Corr. 1.1, 314a16; Met. 1.4, 985a32), but also Aristotle's way of generalizing over Presocratic materialism as 'ὅλην...σωματικὴν' (Met. 1.8, 988b23).

²¹ Aristotle points towards a vague starting point for such a tradition when he distinguishes in Met. 1.3 between the very first thinkers ('οἱ μὲν πάντων ἐξ ἀρχῆς', Met. 1.3, 984a27–8) who are attached to an indivisible unity of the substratum (referring to some of the philosophers he previously mentions: Thales, Anaximenes, Heraclitus) and others who part company from these by introducing more than one element (Met. 984b5–8, presumably the first of these would be Anaxagoras) who are the first to be able to inquire into, at least, a second principle producing some change in the prevailing matter (Met. 984a21–7). This matter thus becomes passive in virtue of its undergoing some change—although, in these lines, Aristotle does not refer to the passive principle in this way, it can be implicitly wrung out of the use of 'the opposite' ('τοῦναντίον') in Met. 984b8, which is the opposite of 'actively moving nature' ('κίνητικὴν [...] φύσιν') in Met. 984b6–7.

passive matter. In the following, we shall trace the history of this notion as it is epitomized in the doxographies all the better to bring out the role the Stoics played.

In the *Timaeus*, that which Plato calls—to mention but a few of the names he uses to describe the receptacle—the ‘*hupodochē*’ (‘a place fit for receiving’, *Tim.* 49a6), the ‘*ekmageion*’ (‘receptor’, at 50c2), the ‘*chōra*’ (‘a place for’, at 52a8), is said to be that which is ‘apt to receive bodies’ (‘*dechomenēs sōmata*’, at 50b6). However, it itself is not a body, though being, at the same time, utterly distinct from the Ideas (52a1–b5).²² This item tends to be assimilated by Aristotle (e.g. *Met.* 1.6, 988a9–11)—but, as has been underlined in recent scholarship, also in particular by Theophrastus²³—to the role of passive matter. Though Plato makes use of the term ‘*hulē*’ (generally translated as ‘matter’), which appears once in the *Timaeus* at 69a6, the term is not used as a further characterization of the receptacle to which the terms listed above are associated. The receptacle is never called ‘*hulē*’ by Plato.²⁴

Aristotle uses the term ‘*hulē*’ for matter. He manoeuvres a shift from talk of ‘*sōmatikon*’ (‘what is corporeal’), used for the corporeal elements (cf. n.20 above), to the formula ‘a kind of matter’.²⁵ It is a formula that appears repeatedly over these pages, gradually allowing Aristotle to move on to speaking only of matter, *hulē*.²⁶ However, Aristotle’s notion of matter is not fundamentally characterized by corporeality, as his referring to the matter of mathematical figures shows.²⁷ Rather more definitive for the development of the notion of matter as the passive element coupled with an active principle is Aristotle’s conception of matter as fundamentally relational, being always the

²² It may be argued that the terms picked out here tend to disregard the connotations suggested by other terms used to designate the receptacle, but this is in the nature of a doxographical tradition; on the difficulties arising from the multiple descriptions of the receptacle in the *Timaeus*, see SAYRE 2003 p.62. The ‘conflicting descriptions’ Sayre speaks of are precisely what makes the *Timaeus* the starting point of contrasting traditions in cosmology and theology.

²³ Cf. Theophrastus in Simplicius in *Phys.* 26.7–15 (= fr. 230 in FORTENBAUGH et al. 1992 vol. 1), speaking of Plato as having drawn out two principles, one as underlying matter, the other as cause and mover; see further REYDAMS-SCHILS 1999 p.44f., also SEDLEY 2002 p.42ff.

²⁴ The sense of ‘*hulē*’ in Plato, in particular at *Tim.* 69a6–8, is metaphorical, akin to the notion of a material, necessary and ready for use, with which, e.g., to construct an argumentation: ‘*οἷα τέκτοσιν ἡμῖν ὕλη [...]* ἐξ ὧν τὸν ἐπιλοιοπὸν λόγον δεῖ συνυφανθῆναι’, ‘just as material for carpenters, [...] from which we must stitch together the rest of our argument’, or as the material for the construction of a boat, cf. *Philebus* 54c2. See further on this SOLMSEN 1963 pp.493–4.

²⁵ E.g. at *Met.* A3, 984a17–18, also 985a32: ‘*ἐν ὕλης εἶδει*’.

²⁶ The term ‘*sōmatikon*’ does not disappear from Aristotelian terminology, rather it is put to a different use, namely as meaning ‘belonging to the body’, ‘bodily’, and as such, for the most part, it qualifies bodily pleasures and pains, e.g. *Arist. EN* 3.13, 1117b28–9.

²⁷ *Arist. Met.* 11.1, 1059b15–16; cf. also Aristotle’s distinction between sensible and intelligible matter at *Met.* 7.10, 1036a8–12, intelligible matter is exemplified as the matter of mathematical figures (τὰ μαθηματικά). See also *Met.* 7.11, 1036b35, where also non-sensible things are said to have *hulē*, matter. It is therefore only in the case of sensible substances, like man or animal, that *hulē* will also be body, cf. *Met.* 7.11, 1037a5–7.

matter of something or other. He reinterprets the Platonic *ekmageion* (referred to directly at *Met.* 1.6, 988a1) on the basis of this relational notion of *hulē*, as he introduces, in the following lines, the term *hulē* as a substitute for *ekmageion* (*Met.* 1.6, 988a3). Aristotle then gives an analysis, or rather twists, the Platonic schema by which the Form generates a product, into that product being like the matter, *hulē*, of the Form. He thus interprets the Form as acting on the matter.²⁸ In this manner, a certain interpretation of the *Timaeus* leads to the notion of passive matter in Aristotle, precisely distinguished, e.g. in *De Anima* (3.5, 430a10–13), from an active agent, ‘causative and active’ (*‘aition kai poiētikon’*) which acts upon matter, *hulē*.

It is as matter (*hulē*), or prime matter (*prōte hulē*) that the Stoics describe, in the strictest sense, their version of the passive principle, as absolutely characterless, shapeless matter, completely inert, hence eternally passive. They give a definite corporealist bent to the notion of the passive element, which however is not in utter contrast with previous philosophical accounts.²⁹ It is a notion which becomes familiar, perhaps in virtue of its adaptability to the Platonic frame (from a certain interpretation), as well as to the Aristotelian (from a certain interpretation), beyond the limits of the specific schools, as is indicated by S.E.’s way of speaking generally about ‘passive matter’ (*‘paschousē hulē’*) for example, without any explanation or reference to a particular school. Thus, throughout the chapter which refutes the existence of causes, S.E. *M.* 9.216, 237, 252 (but also generally whenever causes are mentioned), ‘passive matter’ is indicated as the counterpart of an active cause, e.g. at S.E. *M.* 10.277, where the generative monad is compared to an active cause and the dyad accordingly to passive matter. This way of speaking of matter can also be found in Cicero under the translation ‘*materia*’, for example in *Acad.* 1.24–8, in Varro’s description of a bi-principled cosmology, attributed to the Old Academy, based on an active and a passive principle.³⁰

It is Cicero who reminds us, though, that we should not take for granted that matter is the passive element, in a direct opposition with an active counter-part. For Cicero (in *Fin.* 1.18) speaks of the lack of such a contrast amongst the Atomists, who speak only of matter (*hulē*). Cicero mentions Epicurus in particular, whom we know does indeed speak of *hulē*, and expressly *not* in terms of its being passive in contrast to a further active element. On the contrary. For Epicurus speaks of matter as ‘abandoning’ the

²⁸ A Platonic Idea is not related to what is modelled on it, or what it generates (to continue talking like Aristotle in these lines), in the way a cause may be related to its effect, or matter to what it is the matter of. See the commentary on these lines in ROSS 1924, starting with his final remarks on lines 987b34 on a misrepresentation by Aristotle of the Platonic account.

²⁹ See D.L. 7.150. See REYDAMS-SCHILS 1999 p.44f. on the influence of Platonic and Aristotelian traditions on the Stoic notion of the passive principle.

³⁰ See also Cic. *Fin.* 1.18 where the passive element is that from which something is made (*efficiatur*), and contrasted with an active force (*vis*).

sun and the moon (i.e. actively moving away from them), matter ‘which is always necessary’, to them (*Pyth.* 93). A little further down in the text, certain celestial bodies are said to be hindered from turning like others for lack of the appropriate *hulē* (*Pyth.* 112). This seems rather to imply an active role of matter, or, at the very least, does not support a passive notion of it.

In this way Epicurus stands against the Peripatetic tradition outlined so far to which the Stoics are seemingly shown to adhere (rather than renew).³¹ Or at least, this is the way the doxographers have collected and presented information, passing from one philosophical school to another, through a somewhat superficial and over-simplifying bird’s-eye view of the treatment of the notion of passivity as associated with corporeality.³² The Epicurean option is neglected in that unifying, historicizing effort, presumably for two main reasons: firstly, because it does not fit (because, in effect, matter is not conceived here in opposition to something else), and secondly, because it complicates the doxographical association of the Hellenistic schools as sharing a common notion of body as material, and as such, as that which can act (e.g. by touching) and can be acted upon (e.g. by being touched).

However, it appears that, despite the shared formula (namely, that body is what touches and what is touched), the Epicureans and the Stoics are thinking differently about body. For there is one main distinction, which the doxographical tradition disregards, namely that it is one thing to argue for the corporeality of matter, and another to also establish that matter takes on (if not always, then in the relevant circumstances) an utterly passive role in the interaction with another body. By collating these two questions, thus assuming that matter is fundamentally passive, the doxographical sources can only draw a partial history of the development of matter as passive.

Stobaeus devotes a whole chapter (*Ecl.* 1.11), to the question of *hulē*, condensing the main claims of the various schools, and philosophers into a few paragraphs. From Plato, for whom, Stobaeus says,

matter is body-like, shapeless, formless, figureless, unqualified, and, as much as it is in its own nature, it receives the Forms, being like a nurse, an *ekmageion*, and a mother.³³

³¹ SEDLEY 2002 p.56 mentions these uses of *hulē* in Epicurus as a testimony of the usages of the term outside and beyond the Peripatos, but without further comments on the alternative understanding they broach. Though Aristotle himself speaks of matter as a kind of cause (*Phys.* 2.7, 198a24), this does not engage matter in any sort of activity, as is the case with Epicurus, who is unfolding the implications of his notion of body bound to the constant motion of the atoms.

³² On the doxographical method: MANSFELD in *CHHP* p.17f. and MANSFELD 2008.

³³ Stob. *Ecl.* 1.11.3.8–11: ‘Πλάτων τὴν ὕλην σωματοειδῆ, ἄμορφον, ἀνείδεον, ἀσχημάτιστον, ἄποιον, ὅσον ἐπὶ τῇ ἰδίᾳ φύσει, δεξαμενὴν δὲ τῶν εἰδῶν καὶ οἶον τιθήνην καὶ ἐκμαγεῖον καὶ μητέρα γίνεσθαι.’

The references to the *Timaeus* ('nurse', 'ekmageion', 'mother') double up with less or distinctly non-Platonic descriptives, which are not present in the Platonic texts, such as 'unqualified' or 'formless'. The latter already belong to a Stoic, and assimilated post-Stoic, vocabulary appropriated as common intellectual property.³⁴ The generalized, and normalized, qualifiers allow the doxographer to swiftly move on to Aristotle.³⁵ Aristotle is said to hold that matter 'is not body (*sōma*) but corporeal (*sōmatikē*)' (*Ecl.* 1.11.4.5). A series of claims follow about Zeno and Chrysippus, culminating in the main formulation of what is presented as the doctrine concerning matter of 'the Stoics' as a school of thought, namely that 'matter is body' (*Ecl.* 1.11.5b.5).

On the basis of this condensed history, the contribution of the Stoics is to have merely pushed to its proper conclusion the line of thought conducive to assimilating matter to body. There is thus, in these sources, no emphasis on the Stoics' particularly associating passivity with corporeality, for this is taken for granted in the gradual confirmation of the quality-less state of matter by which it receives form. The Stoics, in this regard, are not considered as great innovators with respect to what the commentators show (by rendering it more explicit) to have actually been Plato's and Aristotle's driving line in discussing the notion of matter.

The doxographical compilations retrace the tradition of associating passivity with the notion of matter back to Plato's *Timaeus*.³⁶ But it is not straightforward at all to identify the starting-point for that tradition in the *Timaeus*, for, as we have already suggested, the rich and multifarious descriptions of the receptacle (which becomes associated with matter and corporeality in the tradition) are open, in Plato's text, to a great number of possible interpretations. It is Aristotle and, to some extent, the Old Academy³⁷ who contribute

³⁴ The consistently negative words qualifying matter become preponderant in later Platonists in order all the better to bring out the contrast between matter as mingled with the sensible world as opposed to the reality of the Forms; they are however consistently used as relatives to the positive qualifier associated with the Form: thus Plot. *Enn.* 1.8.3.14–55 speaks of 'formlessness' (*ἀνείδεον*) in relation to what is form-making (*εἰδοποιητικόν*) amidst a longer series of such contrasting pairs (limitless vs limited, and so on); see a few pages later, *Enn.* 1.8.8.19–24: matter imposes its 'formlessness' on the form, e.g. of heat, thereby generating cold. See the subsequent normalized expansion of qualifiers, as found here in Stobaeus, in the Platonist tradition: e.g. Alcinoüs *Did.* 8.2–3, discussing the receptacle as matter qualified in just these terms, and broadly amongst the Peripatetic commentators on matter as 'formless and unqualified': Alex. *Mant.* 104.19, in *Met.* 566.32 and more; Philoponus in *Gen.Corr.* 9.24, in *Phys.* 16.30, etc.; Syrianus in *Met.* 132.18 and so on.

³⁵ Note that, at Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 882C, where we find an almost identical text as that found in Stob., the first list of negative qualifiers of matter is attributed to 'both Plato and Aristotle'.

³⁶ Cf. SEDLEY 2002 p.60 with n.42: 'it was easy enough' for later ancient commentators, e.g. Aristocles, to go back to Plato as the anchor point for the development of the Stoic theory—Aristocles, to whom Eusebius in *PE* 15.14.1, for instance, also appeals as his authority for his account of Stoicism.

³⁷ Cf. SEDLEY 2002 pp.70–2 arguing, on the basis of Varro's presentation of Academic physics (in Cic. *Acad.* 1.24–8), that it is mainly the old Academy (and in particular Polemo, in opposition

to taking the *Timaeon* receptacle as a notion of passive matter, contrasted with some form of incorporeal God.

However, this interpretation is but one element of a reflection on what constitutes passivity and what constitutes corporeality. For, though less nominally present in the doxographical histories, the Stoic view in fact plays an important role in eventually identifying passive matter with corporeality. Later Platonist reactions against both the Aristotelian and Theophrastian interpretation of the *Timaeon* receptacle, and the Stoic account of matter, testify to the far more complex levels of discussion involved. For these sources treat as distinct, on the one hand, the discussion about the corporeality of matter, and, on the other, that about the passivity, or possible passivity, of body. The contribution of the Stoics, in this light, is important. Because they argue both for the corporeality of matter and that only body can be the passive counterpart of a distinct active body, their arguments, on both fronts, appear as the decisive factors in shaping the tradition to their view concerning the passivity of matter.

As far as the Peripatetic and Platonist history of interpretation of matter is concerned, the decisively corporealist bent was in fact anything but a foregone conclusion. Calcidius, for instance, in the pages discussing matter ('*silva*'), argues that matter is neither corporeal nor incorporeal.³⁸ Discernible, too, in Cicero's account of the physics of the old Academy (*Acad.* 1.24f.), is the original separation of the question of the nature of matter and its subsequent allotted passive role: body (*corpus*) is analysed as the product of an active power (*vis efficiens*) and matter. It is thus 'the product of both' ('*ex utroque*'). It then follows that, separated one from the other, neither of these, i.e. neither the active force or the matter, is considered to be a body. This account should thus caution us from over-hastily assuming a direct influence of Old Academic physics on the Stoics, despite Zeno's early ties with the Academy, attending the lectures of Xenocrates and Polemo (D.L. 7.2). We learn in the same lines that he also attached himself to Crates, the Cynic philosopher, and Stilpo and

to a Xenocratean tendency to de-materialization) that attaches material connotations to '*οὐσία*' (substance) as discussed in the *Timaeus*, which is thus translated by Cicero as '*materia quaedam*', 'some sort of matter'. This material interpretation of substance would then have been handed down to the Stoics, who focused in particular on its utter lack of quality, under the designation, first, of '*ἄποιος οὐσία*' ('unqualified substance') and then simply as 'matter' (*hylē*). As Sedley notes, Polemo's notion of matter suited the Stoic configuration well in that, for the Academics, matter was informed by an intelligible kind of substance, which for the Stoics, easily converted into the active principle. In contrast to this more historical view, FREDE 2005 p.220f. focuses on an originally locative meaning of *εἶναι*: being is to be somewhere, which led the Stoics to consider '*οὐσία*', the participle derived from *εἶναι*, as the ultimate matter providing a place to be in, given that every existing thing must find itself in some place.

³⁸ Calcidius in *Tim.* 319–20, concluding at 320: 'possibilitate corpus et item possibilitate non corpus' (matter 'could equally be body or not'). Cf. a similar claim in Alcinoüs *Did.* 163.6.

Diodorus Cronus, the Megarian logicians.³⁹ The main reasons to doubt that in questions regarding the notion of corporeality, Zeno and the Stoics should be particularly influenced by the Academy—whether endorsing a more (Polemo) or less (Xenocrates) materialist bent (cf. n.37 above)—is that the discussions in the Academy stem from the discussion of the *Timaean* receptacle. But the Stoics do not proceed in that way. They frame the notion of body in terms of activity, and show that that also entails body's—and only body's—role, or possible role (given the right circumstances) as passive. The active body, and all the more so when speaking about the active principle, is thus not corporeal because it is a body, as the Antiochean Platonists are suggesting, but corporeal because it is active—and in the case of the active principle, it is, by its very nature and definition, constantly active.⁴⁰

3.1.3. The Stoic Defence of the Passivity of Body

The doxographical tradition in fact covers a multifaceted line of defence of the corporeality of passive matter. In the main, it is a defence produced by the Stoics through an original and coherent theory of passive body as the corollary counterpart of active body, which shows that the Stoics do not take for granted the passivity of body. The defence of the passivity of matter is tied to the Stoic account of cause in which the active cause is conjoined (*'sundua-zein'*) to the passive receiver of the effect in virtue of the corporeality of both items. This is one aspect discussed amidst the various arguments S.E. puts forward against the existence of causes, bringing to light the connection

³⁹ Cf. SEDLEY 1977 p.79f. See more at 7.1.2 below.

⁴⁰ There is a textual question which is interesting in this regard: at the end of D.L. 7.134, in which the active and passive principles are discussed, one line of transmission, contained in the *Φ* compendium and in the extracts present in the *Suda*, has the word *'ἀσωμάτους'*, i.e. 'incorporeal', qualifying the principles. This reads wrongly: the other complete manuscript tradition (B, P and F) has *'σωμάτων'*, 'corporeal', which seems more consonant with the Stoic view: cf. KIDD 1988 vol.2 p.103, DORANDI 2013 *ad loc.* p.552, see also JUSTUS LIPSIUS 1610 I.4&5, though antiquarian, a meticulous commentary on the only possible reading of *'σωμάτων'* in this D.L. passage. But why did the *'ἀσωμάτους'* (incorporeal) creep into the *Suda*? One possible explanation is that this manuscript tradition bears the trace of attempts at platonizing the Stoics on the basis of Old Academy accounts such as the one related by Cicero, where the shift from incorporeal principle to corporeal when active within a body seems easy to project onto the Stoic two-principled account where the active needs the passive in order to be active. The platonizing move is to consider the principles as incorporeal when abstracted from the body they make up. Such a move not only platonizes the Stoics but in effect diminishes their contribution and specificity. See REYDAMS-SCHILS 1999 p.56f. on Middle Platonist reactions to Stoic corporealism and attempts at contaminating the view, all the better to undermine it. On the Old Academy, as an intermediary between Plato's *Timaeus* and the Stoics: SEDLEY 2002 p.46ff. with some remarks along the same lines in TODD 1976 pp.21–3.

between the corporealist claim about activity and passivity, and the Stoic theory of causes.⁴¹

3.1.3.1. *Being Conjoined: on Brunschwig's 'Graft of Corporeality'*

S.E. frames the question in the following terms (*M.* 9.252ff.): a cause is not separate from its passive matter; otherwise there would be no cause and no affected matter. Therefore, a cause and its passive matter 'are conjoined' (*'sunduazei'*, S.E. *M.* 9.254). A cause, therefore, does not act by itself, given that it acts together with passive matter. The way S.E. understands the notion of being conjoined is that the passive matter can also be said to be participating in the acting, insofar as a cause, conjoined to its passive matter, acts together with it (*'sun-*'). It thus turns out, according to S.E., that that which is passive and acted upon also, in some sense, acts, and that that which acts is also, in some sense, acted upon. Each item involved will thus be both active and passive, such that that which is active is indistinct from that which is passive. To reach this conclusion, S.E. draws on the grounding claim that it is the same kind of item, i.e. an item with the same ontological status, which is both active and passive. This critique from indistinctness is thus derived from the homogeneity of the active and the passive elements. And indeed, the appeal to the notion of conjunction of the active and the passive in this passage is shown by S.E. to be another way of expressing ontological homogeneity.

S.E.'s critique is, to all intents and purposes, directed against the Stoics who are the 'Dogmatists' referred to at *M.* 9.249. For it is the Stoics who hold that the active and the passive items are the same kind of item, namely body. In the previous pages, S.E. considers a variety of causal combinations, all the better to highlight the specificity of the Stoic position, by showing that it is far from straightforward to expect homogeneity between agent and patient. The closest to the Stoic position, according to S.E. (*M.* 9.212), would be Epicurus. The causal relation for Epicurus maintains some form of homogeneity, but both at the level of bodies and of incorporeals: thus bodies are only causes for bodies, whilst incorporeals can only be causes for incorporeals. The view seems to be more of a thought experiment projected onto Epicurus, however it is not the attribution which matters here, but the theorytheoretical configuration.⁴² S.E.'s point is that maintaining ontological homogeneity at a double level

⁴¹ In S.E. *M.* 9.195–330. Many of the causal combinations considered in these pages are not *ad hominem* attributions, but rather a 'sequence of abstract arguments', cf. ANNAS & BARNES 2000 p.xxv. The Stoic position (S.E. *M.* 9. 237–55) is thus tested not against historical debates but within a properly theoretical framework.

⁴² If the incorporeals in question are the properties (*sumbebēkota*) of bodies, as S.E. says, nowhere else in the Epicurean corpus do we find an indication that properties have any agency or independence from the bodies they are the properties of; it is only whichas properties of a body that they have any existence, or 'nature', in the first place, see Epicurus *Her.* 68–9. Generally, for

compromises what it is for an item to be capable of activity and/or passive. For activity and passivity, on this view, are not a particularity of one kind of item, but roles devolved in a certain context and under certain conditions, independently of the nature of the items involved. In addition, the characteristics of the items, given that they belong to separate ontological spheres, cannot be determined through causal roles since both a body and an incorporeal would possess the same capacities, namely to be causes. The result is that by positing homogeneity at a double level, it immediately becomes useless for an explanation of interaction, given that the ontological status of the items involved is not crucial to the explanation. Therefore homogeneity in itself does not determine ontological status, nor can it enable to identify the characteristics of an active or passive item.

This conclusion is consistent with the critique from indistinctness formulated against the Stoics, whose talk of conjunction is interpreted by S.E. as a mere iteration of ontological homogeneity, howbeit reserved to an interaction between bodies. Body is defined with reference to interaction, and interaction is defined with reference to body, therefore what conjunction adds, on this Sextan reasoning, is that both parties involved are bodies, in view of the homogeneity imposed by conjunction. canIt enables us, that is, to ascertain that the passive counterpart to the active body is a body as well.

But is S.E. right to conclude that the active and passive bodies are in fact indistinct and both contribute as active and passive to the interaction?

One way to answer the critique is to understand conjunction in terms of what Jacques Brunschwig has dubbed a 'graft of corporeality'.⁴³ Conjunction, on this interpretation, establishes the corporeality of an item without referring to its activity or passivity. It stipulates the conditions by which to extend corporeality to any item which is conjoined to a corporeal item, by the mere fact of being conjoined. The problem with this analysis of conjunction is that conjunction is either mysterious (a sort of corporeal Midas touch which transforms everything it touches, not into gold, but into body), or it is nothing more than the notion of contact.

It must be something more, or at least different from touch, for contact presupposes corporeality of both items in contact, whereas conjunction proves the corporeality of one item on the basis of the corporeality of the other. Indeed, the introduction of conjunction is supposed to supersede the appeal to contact, which is too general and ambiguous, as highlighted by S.E. *M.* 9.255–7: 'mere contact' is unsatisfactory coming from the Stoics, as it is ambiguous between surface contact and permeation. Moreover, as S.E. goes

Epicurus, the question of causation is considered sophistical, cf. FREDE 1987c p.135. More on Epicurus at 6.4 below.

⁴³ BRUNSCHWIG 1988 pp.88–9: 'greffe de corporéité' (in translation in BRUNSCHWIG 1994a p.133).

on to discuss (*M.* 9.258–66), there is a question about the status of surfaces, and hence the very possibility of contact since, according to some sources, and S.E. here is one of them, surfaces for the Stoics are incorporeal.⁴⁴ But from what we have already discussed about contact, it is apparent that the Stoics do not think about contact in terms of surface encounter when they talk about body as endowed with resistance. Having resistance is the expression of the activity of the body. It is, in contrast, Epicurus who understands resistance as the encounter, hence contact, between the surfaces of bodies or atoms. This is also why talk of contact, and activity through contact, is misleading, firstly, because it seemingly (and erroneously) unites the Stoics with the Epicureans. But also, and most crucially, because it is not consonant with the logical imperative of the Stoics, the imperative, that is, to determine the nature of the relation between two items/bodies in terms of the activity of the one, and the passivity of the other.

To pitch the condition of being conjoined, *sunduazein*, as a ‘grafting’ of the corporeality of one item to another is to identify a stage distinct from causation, whereby the mere conjunction of two items determines their ontological status as bodies. There is no causal explanation by which an active body causes something to happen to another body. It is an attempt to deflect S.E.’s critique from indistinctness between the passive and the active element. Through ‘grafting’, the corporeal status of certain items is guaranteed, though these items do not appear to comply with the basic characterization of body as that which acts. But this interpretation is more of a subterfuge than a true answer to S.E.

The items Brunschwig has in mind are those said to be ‘in a certain state’, ‘*pōs echon esti*’: items which seemingly stand out because they are corporeal without being explicitly characterized as active or passive. Knowledge, for example: it is a body, being the soul, specifically the commanding principle (*hēgemonikon*), ‘in a certain state’, just as the fist is ‘the hand in a certain state’.⁴⁵ Similarly, sound is described as air ‘which is struck’, or ‘struck in a certain way’.⁴⁶ The corporeality of these items is derived from their being the manifest disposition of a body. They are not the same thing as that body and yet they are bodies in virtue of a relation they have with that body. The

⁴⁴ See also Cleom. *Cael.* 161.1.141–2. S.E. *M.* 10.34 speaks of surfaces in terms of limits, assimilating both to place, one of the four incorporeals on Stoic doctrine. See GOULET 1980 p.186; BRUNSCHWIG 1988 p.28f.; and 6.5.2 below.

⁴⁵ S.E. *M.* 7.39: ‘*πάσα δὲ ἐπιστήμη πὼς ἔχον ἐστὶν ἡγεμονικόν, ὥσπερ καὶ ἡ πὼς ἔχουσα χεὶρ πυγμὴ νοεῖται: τὸ δὲ ἡγεμονικόν σῶμα κατὰ τοὺτους ὑπάρχειν*’, ‘all knowledge is the *hēgemonikon* in a certain state, just like a fist is considered as the hand in a certain state. The *hēgemonikon* is held to be a body according to them [the Stoics]’.

⁴⁶ D.L. 7.55: ‘*ἔστι δὲ φωνὴ ἀήρ πεπληγμένος*’, ‘sound is air which is struck’; Ps-Galen *Qual. Incorp.* 467.3: ‘*ταῦτά τε καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα πάντα ὑπάρχειν ἀέρα πεπληγμένον πῶς*’, ‘these and the like [sound and its different expressions, from whistling to thunderous noise] are all air which is struck in a certain way’.

hēgemonikon is a body; knowledge, which is a different thing from the *hēgemonikon*, is a body as well. The contention is that knowledge, being the soul in a certain state, is a body (distinct from the soul) in virtue of being conjoined to the soul. Conjunction is thus nothing but the grafting, i.e. the extension, of corporeality from soul to knowledge. The advantage of this account is that there is no need to search for the cause of how the body disposed, here knowledge, came to be so disposed; its relation of conjunction with the soul is sufficient.

However, as the example of sound shows, the disposed body, here air, is a body which has been acted upon in some way. Sound is 'air which has been struck' (*peplēgmenos*): a perfect participle which indicates the result of something having been done. The result in this case is sound. Generally, to be in a certain state is to display the result of something's having happened, or been done. Thus, in the case of knowledge, the *hēgemonikon* has been affected in such a way as to find itself in a state of knowledge. This is, in fact, a staple approach of Chrysippus, who supplants, for instance, Cleanthes' account of walking (*ambulatio*), who sayshad said that it was 'pneuma extending from the commanding-principle down to the legs',⁴⁷ by stipulating that it is rather 'the commanding-principle itself' (*ipsum principale*).

This is not a dissimilar shift from the one previously mentioned by which Chrysippus describes impressions as 'alterations' of the soul, as an emended formulation of Cleanthes' 'imprints on the soul'.⁴⁸ It is not that Chrysippus has a different view from Cleanthes here. They are both describing the same thing, only Cleanthes' formulations miss out the logical and ontological complexity. For Cleanthes spells out the elements involved in a causal relation: in the case of walking, the soul affecting the legs producing an effect which is walking; in the case of impressions generally, an impressor affecting the soul, producing an effect which is the impression. This however gives an over-simplified account of the soul, in particular of its role in the causal relations whose outcomes are, here, walking, or having impressions. What Chrysippus' formulae enable is to characterize the state as the result of a causal process, as an 'alteration', which is a body disposed in a certain way, without, however, referring to the cause and what it is the cause of, because that is a different question. In speaking of 'alterations' as dispositions of the *hēgemonikon*, Chrysippus preserves the notion of an affected item, but leaves open and distinct the question of causal processes.⁴⁹ The Stoics earned a reputation for being cautious when it comes to identifying causes.⁵⁰ But here, with Chrysippus, we see that it is not a reputation which arises out of neglect, but for the sake of rigour. As we shall see, a proper

⁴⁷ Reported by Sen. *Ep.* 113.23: 'spiritum esse a principali usque in pedes permissum'.

⁴⁸ S.E. M. 7.227–31; D.L. 7.50. See 2.2.7 with n.79 above., and more below in 4.4.2.

⁴⁹ On X-disposed-in-a-certain-way as implicitly grounded on a causal relation with X, see MENN 1999 p.241ff., also GOLDSCHMIDT 1977 p.97.

⁵⁰ Galen *PHP* 4.7.248.7 and 284.20–2; Strabo 2.3.8.

account of the causal relation is highly complex and relies on more than the presence of the active and passive bodies.⁵¹

Grafting turns out to be an account of the corporeality of a body-disposed-in-a-certain-way (*sōma pōs echon*). But this is not a status severed from questions of causation. Plotinus attacks the Stoic account of the *pōs echon* by claiming that, by seemingly bypassing the question of causal agency, the Stoics talk about the *pōs echon* bodies as if they were not passive, affected bodies. Plotinus zeroes in on the reason that why, according to him, the Stoics bypass the cause: namely because the state of *pōs echon* covers up a non-existent, i.e. non-corporeal, cause, which, however, Stoic doctrine cannot allow for.⁵² In this light, Brunschwig's grafting suggestion pre-empts the attack: it is only because the *pōs echon* body stands in a relation of being conjoined, i.e. being grafted, to a first mother-body that it is a *pōs echon* body in the first place—though this mother-body, from which the graft proceeds, need not be identified. But as the grafting interpretation circumvents Plotinus' critique, it confirms that talk of grafting cannot really avoid talk of causation. Nor, therefore, can talk of conjunction, avoid a discussion of causation, despite Brunschwig's interpretation of it as a grafting.

3.1.3.2. *Being Conjoined: Active and Passive Together*

The Stoics are recorded specifically for having considered the conjunction of the passive with the active.⁵³ It is talk of conjunction which clearly distinguishes the Stoics from the Aristotelian tradition, which considers two separate categories for acting (*poiein*) and being acted upon (*paschein*), and which are 'theoretically' (to speak like Philoponus) autonomous one from another. The claim is not that Aristotle thought of acting (*poiein*) and being acted upon (*paschein*) as two separate kinds of processes. After all, Aristotle, in *Phys.* 3.3, 202b11–14, compares *poiein* and *paschein* to the road from Thebes to Athens, and from Athens to Thebes. But Aristotle reserves separate categories for

⁵¹ It is much the same caution, one could argue, which underlies the Stoics' talk of cosmic sympathy, discussed in 1.3.5 above, where it is the alterations (which correspond to the passive states, i.e. the states which have 'been affected together' ('*sumpaschei*'), at S.E. *M.* 9.80, which are discussed, rather than the causes of these states, which, as we suggested, are linked to the principal cause (cosmic pneuma).

⁵² Plot. *Enn.* 4.7.4.10–11. The suggestion is that there is something more to soul other than corporeal pneuma, and that something, which causes pneuma to get into a certain state (*pōs echon*), cannot be a body (*Enn.* 4.7.4.18–21). In other words, the Stoics are trapped and should concede that there is an immaterial soul which is the cause. See also MENN 1999 p.242.

⁵³ See further testimony in Simplicius in *Cat.* 333.36–7: what is passive is said to be conjoined ('*συννηρημένον*', a term used interchangeably with '*συνέζευκται*') to what is active. The claim is made amidst a discussion of active and passive predicates (*katēgorēmata*), indicating active or passive states however misleading the form of the words (*lexeis*) might be, e.g. deponent verb forms which look like passives but indicate activities. Similarly in an earlier remark by Simplicius in *Cat.* 310.14–312.37, where conjunction is expressed by the cognate '*σύζευξις*' (in *Cat.* 310.24–5).

them, which leads, in the Peripatetic tradition and through the commentaries, to their ‘theoretical’ distinction:

we can theorize separately about what acts, and what is acted upon.⁵⁴

This also elicits talk of ‘*haplōs*’, absolute, actions, or actions *simpliciter* (e.g. Simplicius in *Cat.* 313.20), in contrast to ‘mixed’, or ‘combined’ (*sumplekomenai*) actions, which are actions in which some passivity, or that which is acted upon, is also involved, e.g. ‘to be thought’ (*noeisthai*) which involves both action and passivity (Simplicius in *Cat.* 319.18–25).

For the Stoics, to act and to be acted upon are not logically separable. For the conjunction of the active and the passive bodies implies that they depend on each other’s presence, and mutual contact, in order to be the active and passive items they are. Thus a knife lying beside a pound of meat will not be the cause of the latter’s being cut until it is properly applied to it. But the Stoics do speak of actions *simpliciter*: walking, writing, thinking, which are the examples of ‘absolute’ actions given by Simplicius (in *Cat.* 319.25–6). These are analysed, on Stoic doctrine, in terms of incorporeal *katēgorēmata* which stand in a relation to a body (D.L. 7.58 and 63, Sen. *Ep.* 117.13). The difference is not a question of terminology but an ontological reshuffling, and a completely different perspective on action and passion. For actions on the Peripatetic account are derivative on the agent: the action is ‘yoked onto’ to the agent.⁵⁵ But the Stoics distinguish *katēgorēmata* from the active agent with a clear-cut ontological separation: the agent is a body, but the *katēgorēma* is a distinct incorporeal item, one of whose characteristics is that it can obtain in relation to a certain configuration of bodies.

An incorporeal cannot be conjoined with a corporeal item. For the Stoics, conjunction crucially relies (i) on ontological homogeneity, (ii) on the items involved being corporeal, and (iii) on the simultaneous presence of both items. That which corresponds therefore to the action, i.e. the *katēgorēma*, is distinct from agent and patient, in that, not being a body, it is not conjoined to either. The conjunction of active and passive is thus, on the one hand, independent from the *katēgorēma* (for all three conditions listed above relate to conditions uniting corporeal items) and on the other, it is the very condition for the *katēgorēma* to obtain, i.e. attain its mode of reality, because in virtue of being conjoined, the active and passive bodies enter in a certain relation to the

⁵⁴ Philoponus in *Cat.* 166.16–17: ‘ὁ μέντοι λόγος ὁ τῆς κινήσεως δύναται εἶναι διττός· δύναται γὰρ θεωρεῖσθαι καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ ποιούντος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ πάσχοντος’, ‘but the discourse about motion can be split in two: for we can theorize separately about what acts, and what is acted upon’.

⁵⁵ See Simplicius in *Cat.* 301.18–33: the ‘yoke’ (‘σύζυγα’) binds the agent and the kind of action it can perform *qua* agent, e.g. a builder is connected to a certain kind of action, namely building (in *Cat.* 301.28–9). See VAMVOUKAKIS 1980 p.257.

katēgorēma. Thus a knife conjoined to bread makes cutting obtain in relation to it.

It is the terms of the relation which distinguish between the conjoined items: the active body stands in a different relation to the *katēgorēma* from that in which the passive body stands. The critique from indistinctness is thus dispelled. For conjunction determines, beyond mere homogeneity, a certain order of the conjoined bodies in virtue of each body's relation to the *katēgorēma*. This is an order which supports a complex theory of cause in which a corporeal cause brings it about, through its activity, that an incorporeal *katēgorēma* comes to obtain, and by obtaining, becomes true with respect to another body, which is the body identified as the passive body.⁵⁶ It is in this way that the passive body is said to be affected: conjoined with an active body which has caused it to be affected by making it stand in a relation with an incorporeal *katēgorēma*.

Conjunction is thus a grounding condition for causation in which an active body and a passive body are conjoined such that the first is the cause for the second of its having a *katēgorēma* true with respect to it. The homogeneity between the conjoined elements is implied, and supported by the general condition of contact between bodies, but conjunction is not complete without taking into account the role of the incorporeal *katēgorēma*.⁵⁷

3.1.3.3. *To Act or Otherwise be Acted upon, is that the Question of Conjunction?*

Through causation, the capacity of a body to act or be acted upon is actualized. But there is a distinction between the characterization of body as acting (*poioun*) and/or being acted upon (*paschon*), and its actualization in causation. It is a distinction which is also indicated by an ambiguity in the usage of the participles '*poioun*', acting, and '*paschon*', being acted upon, in Greek: for it is ambiguous whether a body is characterized as always acting or always being acted upon, or whether it can do so but is not always either acting or being acted upon, and therefore, sometimes, is neither, or whether, third possibility, if it is not acting, then it is necessarily being acted upon.

In S.E.'s critique from indistinctness between the active and the passive conjoined bodies, a contributing factor is S.E.'s underlying interpretation of '*poioun*', acting, and '*paschon*', being acted upon, as continuous: that is, as 'always acting' and 'always being acted upon'. In other passages, specifically

⁵⁶ Sen. Ep. 65.4; Stob. Ecl. 1.13.1c. Cf. FREDE 1987c pp.137–8, and in far greater detail chapter 7 below.

⁵⁷ On the general but not sufficient condition of contact in the causal relation, cf. ANNAS 1992 p.95, also DUHOT 2005 p.43, on the necessity to include an incorporeal in the interaction between corporeals in order to avoid 'an absurd multiplication of bodies', and thus preventing a new body from being generated for each cause.

passages that focus on the Stoic definition of body as either acting or acted upon (and not passages that belong to a wider discussion of causation), S.E. introduces the modal nuance of capacity into the definition: body is that which is ‘capable (οἶόν τε) of acting or being acted upon’.⁵⁸ The shift of focus from the body as active and passive within an examination of causation to an inquiry into body as such (which is then characterized as capable of being active and/or passive) marks the difference between, on the one hand, a definition of body as it is in the world, as acting and/or being acted upon, and on the other, an abstracted, or theoretical, definition of body—whereby body is defined as the sort of item which can act or is acted upon. As such, it is the appropriate item for actually acting and being acted upon.

The theoretical definition of body provides a characterization of body fit for all kinds of situations involving bodies. It fits the characterization of the active and passive principles, which are bodies, always acting (in the case of the active principle) and always being acted upon (for the passive principle, which is matter).⁵⁹ It fits the special case of the soul, which is the constant sustaining cause keeping a body the body it is (as tenor, *hexis*, at the most basic level sustaining inanimate objects such as stones, to the soul, *psuchē*, which keeps animate bodies alive⁶⁰); though the soul is, at the same time (as we have already seen), that which is passively impressed, or altered, and thus has impressions. It fits the everyday cases of the knife when it is used to cut, or of a door when it has been pushed open.⁶¹ The spectrum of cases which thus fit the definition of body as ‘capable of acting and/or be acted upon’ rely on the flexibility of the ‘and/or’ of the definition, in two ways: on the one hand, in terms of inclusivity and exclusivity, on the other hand, in terms of the actual (or real), and the possible (with its determinate conditions).

Thus, on the one hand, the cases divide according to an exclusive or inclusive reading of ‘or’. If it is taken as marking an exclusive disjunction (thereby nullifying the ‘and’), then the definition stipulates that a body is either active or passive. The exclusive reading applies to the principles, insofar as the active principle acts and only acts, whilst the passive is only and ever acted

⁵⁸ S.E. *PH* 3.38, also *M.* 9.366.

⁵⁹ D.L. 7.134: ‘σώματα εἶναι τὰς ἀρχάς’, ‘the principles are bodies’; see n.40 above. The active principle, identified with God, is said to be eternal *qua* principle, i.e. eternally active over passive matter: ‘εὐεργὸν αὐτῷ ποιῶντα τὴν ὕλην’, ‘continually acting on matter to make it malleable for him’, D.L. 7.136.

⁶⁰ See 1.3.5 with n.136 above. From the pneuma-tenor sustaining stones, iron, or bones: see D.L. 7. 138–9; Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1053F–1054B; Ps-Galen, *Intr.* 726.7–11 (with the Stoic tenor introduced at 697.7–8), to the pneuma-soul sustaining the life of animate beings: D.L. 7.157; S.E. *M.* 9.76; Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.7–8: ‘διὰ τὴν ψυχὴν γίνεταί τὸ ζῆν’ (‘through the soul living comes to be’); Galen *PHP* 3.1.10. See FREDE 1994c p.51 on the transformation of the soul, as principle of life and irrational, to a wholly rational soul and ANNAS 1992 p.9ff. on the terminological differentiation between talk of ‘mind’, as wholly rational, and talk of ‘soul’, as principle of life.

⁶¹ S.E. *M.* 9.211; Clem. *Strom.* 8.9.25.5.

upon. Their roles are not interchangeable, nor does either principle ever cease to perform its assigned role—provided, that is, that it has its counterpart principle conjoined to it. But it does, since, even after the conflagration, the two principles alone survive.⁶² The exclusivist reading provides a net distinction between the active and the passive such that at no point can they be susceptible to the critique from indistinctness. But the net distinction is compromised when it comes to all other bodies (the soul or the knife alike).⁶³ In this case an inclusivist reading of the ‘and/or’ in the definition must be appealed to, for all other bodies can alternate from acting on something to being acted upon. Be this as it may, the exclusivist model, epitomized by the conjunction of the principles, is crucial to setting out the conditions for a body to act or be acted upon in reality. For though the soul is both active and passive, or a nail can both push into a lintel (active) and be hit by a hammer (passive), each particular causal sequence has either one or the other. Thus, as far as keeping an individual alive, the soul is active and its active role is triggered by the conjunction of the soul with a particular mass of flesh and bones, which it thus animates. It is a distinct and different causal sequence, in which something capable of making an impression encounters a soul capable of receiving the impression. Similarly with the knife, which in conjunction with a cuttable body (bread, butter, etc.), plays the active role, but does not in the absence of an item which can fulfil the passive role. Therefore it is the particular bodies which find themselves conjoined that determine which is the active and which the passive. As long as the passive counterpart which enables a body to be active is present, that body will be active; the case of the principles is paradigmatic of that configuration and constitutes the model framework for every such encounter, however fleeting the encounter may be, as when a knife is momentarily put to use in cutting bread. For this reason, the ‘and/or’ of the definition also contains an indication about the actual and the possible. For the number and kinds of conjunctions a body can enter, in order to play either its active or passive role, is determined by the way(s) a body can act or be acted upon. Again, this is most straightforward with the principles. The active principle can only act in conjunction with unqualified matter. There is thus only one possible state of conjunction in which its capacity for action is realized. And in the case of the principles, that conjunction holds eternally, so that it is always the case that the active principle is acting on matter. Thus, what actually is the case, i.e. what is real, is all that is possible for the active principle to do. As we move away from the model of the principles, the identity between what is real and what is possible becomes increasingly blurred. What is the case, i.e. the real states-of-affairs, come about through the

⁶² D.L. 7.134: the active and passive principles are ‘ungenerated and indestructible’.

⁶³ The other bodies, ‘in the ordinary sense’ as in REYDAMS-SCHILS 1999 p.58 commenting on the ‘and/or’.

conjunction of a certain body acting on an appropriately passive body. This depends on certain conditions being met, as also on previous configurations, which themselves lead to changes in the activity, and passivity, of the bodies involved. What is possible thus is greater than what is real. The limits of the possible are functions of the kind of activities bodies are capable of (and the kind of passivities, which other bodies can receive). Thus what is real and what is possible sometimes overlap, with increasing irregularity, and depending on a longer and complex chain of antecedent causes.

The comparison broached above between the (theoretical) definition of body and the characterization of body within discussions of causation, in which a body, in reality, is not only capable of, but actually acts and/or is acted upon, yields not so much a distinction between theory and practice, but rather a complex appreciation of reality (understood as corresponding to all the states-of-affairs which now hold, or obtain). For any given event is shown to be framed by a certain conjunction in which one body is exclusively acting on another so as to sustain the reality of a particular state-of-affairs for as long as the active body can continue to act on the passive body. When one conjunction breaks up, another follows which is dependent on the possibilities of activity and passivity of the bodies involved, in the configuration they find themselves in. This is so for every existing body in the cosmos, which indicates how tightly contained the life of the cosmos (which is one single living being, D.L. 7.139) is, on Stoic doctrine.

In restricting to bodies the capacity to act or be acted upon, the Stoics make two radical claims, one stronger than the other. The weaker point is that the agents and patients are homogeneous. They are bodies, and bodies alone act and/or are acted upon. The stronger point is the fundamental contrast the Stoics make with theories which give any form of causal agency or reception of effects to non-corporeal items, such as Plato's account of the incorporeal soul and the Forms (e.g. at *Phaed.* 100bff.), but also separate immaterial beings such as the Aristotelian god.⁶⁴ On Stoic doctrine, acting is the only form of causal agency and only bodies can, and do indeed, act. It also follows—and we have hinted as much a few lines above in speaking of ‘events’—that every existing body by exercising its capacity to act or be acted upon thereby determines sequences of events. An event is characterized by a causal frame, in which something happens to something else. This is a full realization of the consequences of the corporealization of being. It is time now to delve deeper into what the Stoics rely on as a criterion of corporeality: if something is corporeal, then it is capable of either acting on something or being acted upon by something.

⁶⁴ Cic. *Acad.* 1.39 on the contrast between Zeno, for whom nothing other than body can produce effects, and the Platonists and Peripatetics. On the impossibility for the Stoics that an incorporeal be able to act or be acted upon, see S.E. *M.* 8.263 and 407–8.

3.2. THE STOIC CRITERION FOR CORPOREALITY AND THE PLACE OF INCORPOREALS IN ONTOLOGY

The corporealization of being constitutes a radical shift of world view from Plato, but Plato is also the privileged, negative interlocutor in the elaboration of this world view.

3.2.1. The Stoics and the Gigantomachia

Since antiquity, the links between the Stoic doctrine concerning the criterion for corporeality, and what has become known as the Gigantomachia in Plato's *Sophist* (245e–249d), have been emphasized many times.⁶⁵ Indeed, they have been reaffirmed many times in modern scholarship, for instance by von Arnim, who, in his collection of Stoic Fragments, attributes to Chrysippus what in fact is a direct quotation Clement makes from Plato's *Sophist* 246a–b.⁶⁶ The Stoic criterion for corporeality clearly bears some similarity in formulation to the criterion of being, suggested to the earth-born Giants in the *Sophist*, who, in accepting it, thereby become to some extent reformed. It is the following: if something manifests the slightest capacity to do something or have something done to it, then it exists (*Soph.* 247e1–3). This criterion for being is rejected in the very same dialogue by the Friends of the Forms (FF) on the grounds that it draws out a condition satisfied only by items subject to change, and not by being (*Soph.* 248c7–9).⁶⁷

The earthborn Giants initially are said to associate existence solely with bodies (*Soph.* 246b1), taking bodies to be all that which can be grasped and touched and which is visible.⁶⁸ The criterion for being is supposed to persuade the Giants that incorporeal things such as justice, wisdom, or the soul (which are neither visible nor able to be touched) also exist, though they are not bodies: for to exist is to be minimally capable of acting or being acted upon. Now the Stoics use the very same criterion to establish the opposite of what it is intended to establish in the *Sophist*. Rather than extending existence beyond sensible objects, the Stoics extend corporeality beyond sensible objects, namely

⁶⁵ Thus Elias in Porphyry *Isag.* 47.29–33 and David in *Porphy.* *Isag.* 111.4–5 refer to the Stoics as 'earthborn' (*σπαρτοί* and *γηγενείς*), who do philosophy 'starting from trees and stones'—the trees and stones from Plato's dialogue (*Soph.* 246a8), as underlined by BRUNSCHWIG 1988 p.65ff. See also FREDE 1987a p.344; HAHM 1977 p.12; AUBENQUE 1991b pp.376–81; SCHUBERT 1994 p.116f.; LONG 2013a p.113f.; BAILEY 2014 pp.258–9.

⁶⁶ SVF ii.359, 'corrected' by HÜLSER in *FDS* frag. 739.

⁶⁷ See further on this rejection BRUNSCHWIG 1988 p.66f.

⁶⁸ Plato *Soph.* 246a8–10, 247c4–7.

to such items as qualities and souls which, for the Stoics, are bodies.⁶⁹ The limit of corporeality is fixed at the point at which the criterion is not satisfied. In this manner, the Stoics 'dare unashamedly to claim that everything is a body', a step which Theaetetus says not even the Giants would dare to take (*Soph.* 247c2). Theaetetus' passing remark shows that Plato is presenting us with his own caricature of a materialist view, rather than representing an actual view. In turn, the Stoics are not picking up on an actual view held by people Plato is arguing against. The Stoics read Plato and reach their own conclusion.⁷⁰

The same terms in which the criterion for existence is set in the *Sophist* indicate, for the Stoics, a criterion for corporeality. But the shift does not occur through mere substitution. It rather involves a Stoic understanding of what body is, and of what being is, which do not precisely correspond to any of the ways hypothetically considered in the *Sophist*.⁷¹ Nor is the Stoic view exactly opposed to any of these views.⁷² It is rather the result of a certain interpretation and merging of several points put forward in the dialogue, in which the main notions which constitute the basis of Stoic ontology, namely body, being, and incorporeality, are examined in a series of combinatorial options.⁷³

Though the words 'body' ('*sōma*'), 'incorporeal' ('*asōmaton*') and 'being' ('*einai*') are used, in Plato's dialogue, by the Giants as well as by the FF, they do not seem to be understood in the same way when used by one group or the other. The divergence in usage is perhaps most appropriately presented, for our purposes, in terms of how, on both reformed views, the criterion is

⁶⁹ On the corporeality of qualities: Sen. *Ep.* 106.3ff. and 117.2–15; Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1085E and *Virt. Mor.* 441C; of qualities and soul: Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.5b.7; Simplicius in *Phys.* 530.11–14. Of the soul: D.L. 7.156–7; Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1084A; for a defence of the corporeality of the soul attributed to Cleanthes and an argument for the separability of the corporeal soul from body, attributed to Zeno and Chrysippus: see Tertullian *An.* 5, Nemesius *Nat. Hom.* 2.20.14–17, 2.21.6–9 and 2.22.3–6; other references to Zeno and Cleanthes together by Longinus quoted by Eusebius *PE* 15.21.2 and in Calcidius in *Tim.* 220.

⁷⁰ BRUNSCHWIG 1988 p.69: 'la piste fugacement indiquée par Platon, ne sera pas perdue pour tout le monde'. See also KUPREEVA 2003 p.301.

⁷¹ Plato *Soph.* 246d5–6: the Stranger of Elea himself considers the questioning of the Giants and the FF as one 'for the sake of argument' ('*λόγω ποιῶμεν*'), with his presumed interlocutors 'hypothetically' accepting his suggestions ('*ὑποτιθέμενοι*').

⁷² AUBENQUE 1991b p.382: only part of the Stoic project, in adopting the criterion, is to deny being to incorporeals. The agenda is far greater, consisting of a re-evaluation of the conditions for corporeality.

⁷³ A comparative analysis need not become an 'historical' reading which could be misleading, cf. GRAESER 1975 p.90. The relation between the Stoics and Plato's *Sophist* is more profitably considered in terms of a critical analysis, or as BRUNSCHWIG 1988 p.64, puts it, as a 'challenge' ('un défi à relever'), which the Stoics take on: to show that it is possible to consider the soul and qualities as corporeal without jeopardizing their distinctive roles. BAILEY 2014 p.258's claim that the Stoics have a 'conscious intention of turning against' Plato is exaggerated and again misleading, since the dialogue the Stoics engage with the Platonic line results in a much more complex account than a flat reversal, as shall be defended in this and the following chapter.

accepted and applied.⁷⁴ For the FF, what is incorporeal is exclusively associated with being, which never changes, like the Ideas. They therefore take the criterion to apply to all that changes, but not to being, i.e. not to what is incorporeal (*Soph.* 246b7–8). The Stoics call corporeal all that which the FF indicate as forever changing and never being, and to which the criterion can be applied. In so doing, the Stoics reinstate the notion of body which the FF eliminate. The FF are explicitly said to refuse to call the items subject to generation ‘bodies’, thus the expression ‘what for those people are bodies...’⁷⁵ refers to what the Giants (who are ‘those people’) call body, but which the FF do not even call body. The FF rather call these ‘some sort of generative process contrary to being’.⁷⁶

These unreformed FF represent a radical position: that one of the aspects by which the Forms are diametrically opposed to the sensible objects, is that the Forms have identifiable, distinct characteristics, whereas the sensible objects utterly lack such distinctness.⁷⁷ The FF thus do not consider a notion of body at all, for there is no specific thing there which corresponds to what we could call a body. They only recognize the incorporeal as a real, identifiable thing. The criterion suggested to them is not therefore a criterion for being in their view, though they accept that it characterizes those non-incorporeals which are forever subject to generation and destruction. It becomes explicitly a criterion for corporeality once the Stoics call body all that is not being on the view of the FF. The Stoics thus take a decisive step in calling ‘body’ what is, in the more generous terms of the *Phaedo*, at best ‘body-like’ (*sōmatoeides*, *Phaed.* 81b5–c4) for the FF.

For the Giants, what is incorporeal is the opposite of what is corporeal: thus, in contrast to the corporeal which is visible and can be touched and therefore exists, the incorporeal is all that is invisible and ungraspable and for these reasons does not exist. The reformation of the Giants consists in their applying the criterion as a criterion for being, such that the incorporeal, which for the unreformed Giants does not exist, can also be said to exist. What the FF

⁷⁴ Plato *Soph.* 246d4–9: ‘reformed’ corresponds to the use of *‘βελτίονες’* in the passage. The reformation consists, in the main, in integrating the criterion in some way or other into the world view of each different group.

⁷⁵ Plato *Soph.* 246b9: *‘τὰ δὲ ἐκείνων σώματα...’*.

⁷⁶ Plato *Soph.* 246c1: *‘γένεσιν ἀντ’ οὐσίας φερομένην τινὰ προσαγορεύουσιν’*.

⁷⁷ In Plato’s *Phaedo* (in which an inquiry into what is the body in contrast to the soul is pursued without the caricaturist intent of the *Sophist* about the gaping gap between the Giants and the FF) this opposition is elaborated further: the sensible objects are always changing, never the same, and belong to the realm of the visible (in *Phaed.* 78c6–8 with 79a9–10), as opposed to the ‘other kind of being’ which are not liable to change, grasped by the intellect, not perceivable and not liable to destruction, and to which belong the Ideas and the soul. The insistence here is that there is no way of properly pinpointing the nature of what we call the body in contrast to the soul, for the most we can say is that body is more akin to the visible than to the Forms (*Phaed.* 79b4–6).

consider to be incorporeal, indeed the very notion of an incorporeal as, at its core, what is stable and unchanging, is clearly different from what the Giants consider as incorporeal. Yet the Stoic interpretation merges the views, guided by the domain of applicability of the criterion. In dragging their incorporeals into the class of items satisfying the criterion, the reformed Giants take the first step, brought to its full realization by the Stoics, in making the incorporeal items (incorporeals according to the Giants, i.e. soul and qualities) corporeal. The procedure is supported by these incorporeals satisfying the same criterion as the ever-changing items to which the FF had agreed to apply the criterion, and which are reinstated as bodies by the Stoics. Thus the Giants' incorporeals enter the class of the Stoics' corporeals. The only items from those considered in the dialogue which are left out of the domain of applicability of the criterion are the items which are incorporeal according to the FF, namely the Forms. In effect, the Stoic criterion for corporeality does not apply to them. The Forms are subsequently submitted, on Stoic doctrine, to a radical 'ontological devaluation' as merely mind-dependent concepts.⁷⁸ In this the Stoic position is in opposition to the view of the FF. For that which the FF discard, because they cannot even call it 'body' but merely 'some kind of generative process' (quoted in n.76 above), is precisely what the Stoics consider to properly exist. Whereas the Forms, which the FF say are the only things which exist, are discarded by the Stoics as not even something.⁷⁹

3.2.2. Corporealization of Being

The literal incorporation Incorporating, literally, soul and qualities into the class of the corporeals in virtue of their compliance with the criterion for corporeality gives a definite and idiosyncratic understanding of what a body is for the Stoics—distinct from the Unreformed Giants, the Reformed Giants, the FF and the Reformed FF. It is clear that the terms of the criterion are crucial in fixing the Stoic ontological framework. For the corporealization (to designate thus the Stoic approach) is a corporealization of being.

The identification of body with being on the Stoic interpretation is not equivalent to the 'crude' identification of body with being which the Unreformed Giants initially posit. By having corporealized the Giants' incorporeals, the understanding of 'body' in the equation is altered—necessarily so, given

⁷⁸ See BRUNSCHWIG 1988 p.79, SEDLEY 1985 p.89, on the reversal of the ontological scale operated by the Stoics.

⁷⁹ The Forms, which are genera and species according to the Stoics, are described as 'quasi-somethings' ('ὡσαυτί τινα'), which are 'quasi' because actually they are 'not-somethings' ('οὐτίνα') (which is different from nothing at all), see D.L. 7.61, Stob. *Ecl.* 1.12.3.2–3. On this see BRONOWSKI 2013 p.278f. and 3.2.4 below.

that the Giants do not change their mind about what is body but about what is being.⁸⁰ Therefore the Stoics do not take up the position of the Unreformed Giants but reinvest the position of the Reformed Giants with a different notion of body, fit to cover all that the Reformed Giants have accepted as existing. The insistence on, and defence of, body as the only item capable of acting or being acted upon (with the underlying view that causation is precisely this, namely acting and being acted upon) makes for a distinct corporealist understanding of being. Hence the Stoic claim that corporeality is existence.

The Stoic interpretation of the *Sophist* is doubly reversed: (i) externally, in that what is proposed to the Giants is to extend being beyond what seems corporeal to them, whereas the Stoics extend corporeality to what seems incorporeal to the Giants; (ii) internally, in that the criterion for being is twisted into confirming the coincidence of body and being on the grounds that, by being assimilated by the Reformed Giants, the criterion enables them to acknowledge the existence of all kinds of items, from sensible objects to invisible ones such as the soul. Thus, for the Reformed Giants, all that which satisfies the criterion constitutes all that there is in the world. With the Stoics' corporealization of the criterion, all the items which were grouped as existing by the Reformed Giants are now recognized as bodies. But only bodies exist. Thus all that exists is corporeal. In this manner, the Stoic criterion for corporeality is also a criterion for existence, but the standard of existence is different from the notion of existence in the *Sophist*. For the Stoics, to exist is to exist as a body, and it follows that to exist is to satisfy the criterion for corporeality, namely to act or be acted upon.

A third twist to the ontological framework of the *Sophist* needs to be noted. It is a final amalgamation, by the Stoics, of the views of the FF and the Giants. Namely, (iii) as we said above, the criterion for existence enables the Reformed Giants to make all that there is in the world according to them (corporeals and incorporeals in their sense of the terms) exist. Though reformed, they are, after all, still Giants and are bound to a certain 'crude' view of the world limited to those items. On the other hand, the FF offer a view of what there is in the world as containing the unchanging Forms, to which being is exclusively reserved. But their world-view is also one in which, in some way, are found the changing items subject to generation, though they do not exist and do not even have a name. Once these items are recognized as bodies by the Stoics—bodies which cover both the Giants' corporeals and incorporeals—it appears that the ontological framework of the FF is broader and contains more items than the Giants'. For there are the bodies and the Forms. Crucially, the Stoics do not abandon that ontological breadth. For the Stoics do not merely cancel

⁸⁰ Diverging here somewhat from BRUNSCHWIG 1988 p.73, it seems important to note a nuance from a straightforward rehabilitation by the Stoics of the initial claim of the unreformed Giants: after all, the Giants accept that soul and qualities exist but not that they are bodies.

out the Forms, and stick to the world as furnished according to the world-view of the Reformed Giants. In this regard, Plutarch (*Adv. Col.* 1115F–1116C) draws an insightful parallel between the Platonists and the Stoics. For sure, Plutarch reminds us, Plato and the Platonists distinguish between the Ideas which are ‘beings’ (*onta*) and the items subject to generation and corruption, which are ‘becomings’ (*ta gignomena*), but they do not withhold from the *gignomena*, the becomings, some ‘nature’ (*phusis*) or ‘use’ (*chrēsis*). That is to say, the sensible objects are there even if they do not exist, properly speaking. But the Stoics have something similar: for they distinguish, according to Plutarch, between what they call ‘beings’ (*onta*) and ‘things’ (*tina*), and these ‘things’ (which are thus not beings) are nevertheless ‘used in life and in philosophy’. Plutarch is thereby suggesting that, though the Stoics alter the existential conditions, they too make room in their reconfigured ontology for something which is being and something which is not being. What is more, the suggestion is that this metaphysical breadth is inherited from a discussion with Platonism—all the more so in that, in these very same lines, Plutarch singles out the Epicureans, distinguished from the Stoics, as radically parting ways from the Platonic lessons in saturating their world-view with only one kind of existence (i.e. the atom). For the Stoics, the convergence of corporeality and existence is a restriction of existence to bodies but not of the world, or reality, to existence.

The limit of corporeality is fixed at the point at which the criterion is not satisfied. Thus incorporeals, according to the Stoics, neither act nor are acted upon, nor are they able to. Their incapacity to satisfy the criterion for corporeality also means that incorporeals do not exist. This is a third way of understanding, by now, what it is to be incorporeal: third coming after (1) the Giants’ understanding, and (2) the FF’s. To a great extent, this book is concerned with what this third way consists in. The criterion for corporeality sets a limit on one side, but there is also a limit on the other side: it is not merely by not satisfying the criterion that any kind of item is subsequently considered to be incorporeal.⁸¹ Platonic Forms, for example, insofar as they are ‘common’ or universal items (*koina*), are not incorporeal, but are concepts born in the mind, which are not even something.⁸² Incorporeals, on the other hand, are something. They are, as such, real, in a different way from existing bodies, and in contrast to concepts, which are utterly deprived of an ontological status. The incorporeals are the ‘things’, *tina* which Plutarch alludes

⁸¹ Thus AUBENQUE 1991b p.379 speaks of an ‘incorporel *spécifique*’ (my italics) in referring to the Stoics’ incorporeals, emphasizing thereby the precise Stoic application of the term, which does not designate all that is not corporeal, but a certain class of items belonging to reality and distinct from non-real items.

⁸² As already noted in n.79, see Simplicius in *Cat.* 105.11: ‘... οὐτινα τὰ κοινὰ παρ’ αὐτοῖς λέγεται’, ‘... universals are said by them, to be not-somethings’.

to, which are distinct from beings (*onta*) but are nevertheless ‘useful in life and in philosophy’, that is to say, they are there in reality.

3.2.3. Incorporeals in Reality: What is at Stake?

There are four ‘canonical’ incorporeals: time, void, place, and *lekta*.⁸³ Their presence and inclusion in the Stoic ontological framework is perhaps, at first blush surprising, and has certainly been repeatedly questioned. For one, the addition of a set of incorporeal items rather undermines the account of body as the touchstone of existence, and the radical enterprise of corporealization of being. There are two kinds of critique on this count: the first, that the four incorporeals are foundational and wrongly dislodged from the realm of existents, the second, that the incorporeals are after-thoughts, somewhat clumsily added by the Stoics once they realized that an utterly corporeal-materialist ontology, like that of Plato’s Giants, cannot sustain itself on its own. Plutarch represents the first branch of criticism. He reproaches the Stoics for having ‘robbed’ of their existence these four necessary and constitutive items of reality (Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1116B). The four incorporeals, for Plutarch, play full and crucial roles in the workings and analysis of reality, to which their lesser status, as non-existents, does not do justice. Seneca, to some extent, and a tradition of commentators both ancient and modern, attack the inclusion of the incorporeals as after-thoughts which do not properly fit the stringent criterion for corporeality self-imposed by the Stoics. The claim is thus that the four incorporeals are a later adjunct, a last theoretical resort in order to insert into reality necessary elements which the strict Stoic standard for existence does not account for.⁸⁴

An additional point of criticism concerns the apparent heterogeneity of the four items, and in particular the difference between *lekta* and the other three. The claim is that *lekta* are added to the group of incorporeals at a further stage once they appear as crucial in a theory of language.⁸⁵ In showing that *lekta* in particular are neither later adjuncts to an established trio of incorporeals, nor later adjuncts in the setting out of an ontological framework, it will appear that the notion of an incorporeal, quite generally, is not an ontological anomaly but a grounding element of Stoic ontology. There is neither clumsiness in adding

⁸³ S.E. *M.* 10.218. The expression ‘canonical’ is introduced by BRUNSCHWIG 1988 pp.28–30 who shows that the variations on the list, as for example in Cleomedes *Cael.* 161.1.141–2, are retraceable to a canonical list of which one item is metonymically replaced by a sub-kind. *Idem* in DUHOT 1989 p.92. See also ALGRA 1995 pp.308–9. On the alternative list in Cleomedes, see 6.5.2 below.

⁸⁴ Sen. *Ep.* 117.6. See HAHM 1977 p.25 n.24 considering the Stoic incorporeals as a ‘face-saving device’. Also on this critique, GOURINAT 2009 p.56.

⁸⁵ RIST 2006 p.25f., DUHOT 1989 pp.48–9.

incorporeals to a firmly established criterion for corporeality as the standard for existence; nor is the status of incorporeals a lesser status, which falls short of the role the four incorporeals are meant to play. This is one of the main conclusions Brunschwig draws from his study of the Stoic ontological framework.⁸⁶ The guiding thread in his masterly article is the defence of an original Stoic doctrine of a supreme genus, the 'something' ('*ti*'), which is deduced, to a great extent, from an analysis of Stoic interpretations of Platonic ontology, in particular the *Sophist's* Gigantomachia. An important part is devoted to Stoic considerations about the Platonic Ideas and their subsequent relegation to mind-dependent items. The mind-dependent concepts, to which the Ideas are reduced, are assigned not non-existence, but not-somethinghood: they are said to be not-somethings (*outina*). Brunschwig suggests that the notion of a not-something tends all the more to promote, by contrast, the notion of something as the genus for all that is real, i.e. independent of the mind. Accordingly, incorporeals are somethings, *tina*, in contrast to the not-something concepts. The somethings fulfil a basic requirement for being real, namely being just that, something. It is a requirement which bodies satisfy a priori, possessing the highest ontological status in that they exist.⁸⁷ An analysis of the Platonic Ideas, which become Stoic not-somethings, plays, in this manner, an important role in a construction or reconstruction of a Stoic theory of the something, *ti*, as the genus of reality.

Brunschwig's analysis is crucial in a discussion of the Stoic notion of a mental concept (*ennoēma*), given that the Stoics associate their notion of a concept with their critique of the Ideas.⁸⁸ The peculiar term 'not-something' for concepts triggers a series of legitimate remarks about a contrast between the mind-dependent not-somethings and all that is extra-mental and thus part of reality, accordingly designated as 'something'. However, there is a more fine-grained distinction to draw: for it would seem that the Stoic descriptions of not-somethings, at least at a first stage, have recourse to a contrast which is stricter in scope than one between not-something and all the items belonging to reality, grouped under a supreme genus. The strict contrast is that between the not-somethings and the items which minimally are something, i.e. the incorporeals.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ BRUNSCHWIG 1988 pp.24–6, 85–6, 109.

⁸⁷ BRUNSCHWIG 1988 p.77f.

⁸⁸ E.g. in Stob. *Ecl.* 1.12.3.4–8.

⁸⁹ Is the doctrine of a supreme genus *ti* part of the original, orthodox Stoic scheme? The majority of passages referring to this theory are by late non-Stoic authors who are either criticizing the Stoics or mixing some Stoic traits with teachings of other schools: see Alex. in *Top.* 301.19ff. and 359.12–16; *ΣArist. Cat.* printed in Arethas pp.139.27; Philo *Leg.* 3.175; Sen. *Ep.* 58.15. On the other hand, BRUNSCHWIG 1988 argues that the theory of the supreme genus, which these late authors are refuting, appears to be already widespread and well-known. This tends to suggest that the theory is already quite established by the time these authors attack it. Thus, at some point onwards, the *ti* status of incorporeals extends so as to become the minimum requirement for being real. But when exactly is difficult to gauge.

3.2.4. Somethings and Not-somethings: in Defence of the Reality of Incorporeals

There is a narrower and a broader application of the notion of a something (*ti*) in our texts. On the narrow application, an item is a something when it is minimally real, that is mind-independent. The incorporeal is thus a something on this narrow understanding. For even if it lacks in being, (and is incapable of being active or passive), it still retains a certain ontological status, namely that of being something.⁹⁰ It subsists as an incorporeal, and must belong to one of the four canonical incorporeals. It is not this narrow application of a something, which fits the way that the something is said to be the supreme all-encompassing genus. If also a body can be said to be a something, then it must be according to a different application of something. Accordingly, from the strict, narrow application, designating the status of an incorporeal, the Stoics—or at least those Stoics who agreed on establishing the supreme genus, something, over bodies and incorporeals—retain the notion of a something as the minimal common status in reality. As such something can become an all-encompassing genus, appropriate to cover both bodies and incorporeals. In this light, there is a double application, a narrower and a broader application, of one and the same notion.⁹¹

Concepts, having no ontological status, are described with reference to the minimum ontological status which they cannot even reach: they are ‘*anupostatata*’ (‘which cannot subsist’) and ‘*anuparkta*’ (‘which cannot obtain’).⁹² These terms are morphological constructs derived from the privative prefix *an-* attached to the verbal adjectives derived from ‘*huphistanai*’ (‘to subsist’) and ‘*huparchein*’ (‘to obtain’), the two verbs which are used to mark the ontological status of the incorporeals (cf. 3.1 n.4 above). There is thus a stark contrast between what cannot subsist (mental concepts) and what subsists (incorpor-

⁹⁰ As for the use of the term ‘ontology’ and ‘ontological status’, it should be taken as covering the ‘furniture of reality’, which contains also incorporeals which, though they are not ‘*onta*’, have ontological status without being, cf. BRUNSCHWIG 2003 pp.209 and 212–13. In the light of the distinction between different applications of ‘*ti*’, it is not straightforward, and actually confusing, to move towards talking of a ‘tinology’ as suggested by AUBENQUE 1991b p.377 n.10 and p.384.

⁹¹ It is a characteristic Stoic practice to apply the same term as heading genus-term and as one of the species-terms as well: e.g. the Stoic definition of the good, where the good is said ‘in general’ (‘*koinōs*’) with a broad application, and also ‘in particular’ (‘*idiōs*’) with a much narrower domain of application, cf. D.L. 7.94–5; S.E. M. 11.25–7.

⁹² S.E. M. 1.17: of the not-somethings ‘*ἀνυπόστατα γὰρ ἔστι τῇ διανοίᾳ τὰ κατὰ τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς στοᾶς*’, ‘they do not even subsist, for the mind, according to the Stoics’; Stob. Ecl. 1.12.3.9 on the concepts, which are what the Platonic Ideas come down to: ‘*Τούτους δὲ οἱ Στωϊκοὶ φιλόσοφοι φασὶν ἀνυπάρκτους εἶναι*’, ‘these, the Stoic philosophers say, cannot obtain’ (on this passage see n. 96 below).

eals); the *outina*, the not-somethings (mental concepts) and the *tina*, the somethings (incorporeals). There is therefore a strict understanding of '*ti*', 'something', which is crucial to identify, through the contrast with the mind-dependent not-somethings.

The question of the broader, all-encompassing understanding of '*ti*' is not especially relevant to us, for it will become ever more apparent that for the broader understanding to apply, most of the specific features of *tina* as the status of incorporeals are relinquished for the sake of promoting 'something' as the mark of mind-independent reality, as opposed to mind-dependency. The minimum ontological status of being mind-independent is what associates bodies and incorporeals, but their ways of being real differ. In identifying the strict use of the '*ti*' as the status of incorporeals, it is the way of being real, specific to the incorporeals, which comes to light. For the Stoics are intent on a strict distinction between incorporeals and concepts precisely because the differentiation between the mind-independent status of incorporeals, from the mind-born concepts, is crucial for the defence of the reality of incorporeals. The importance of the distinction is rooted in a common origin: namely that Stoic concepts and incorporeals both derive from the Stoic interpretation of the Platonic Ideas.

It is common enough to find the Platonic Ideas referred to as 'incorporeal'. The FF from Plato's *Sophist* say the Forms are incorporeal ('*asōmata*', *Soph.* 246b8). Later accounts of Platonic doctrine present the Ideas as 'incorporeal substances' ('*ousia asōmatos*'),⁹³ or directly as 'the incorporeal Ideas' ('*tas asōmatous ideas*'), as often in S.E., a qualification of the Ideas presented as a well-known and obvious Platonic tenet, with no further explanation needed.⁹⁴ As we have seen, there is more than one way of understanding what 'incorporeal' stands for. The Stoics, in their constructive critique of Platonic metaphysics, reject the reality of the Platonic Ideas, but are interested in the role which something incorporeal can play in ontology. Thus they distinguish between the Idea as a universal—to which is assigned no subsistence at all (i.e. no mind-independent reality, since the Ideas are reduced to concepts born in the mind)—and the status of an incorporeal, which the Idea has.

Reducing the Ideas to mind-dependent concepts is not equivalent to 'eliminating' them, as has been suggested in the literature.⁹⁵ For concepts are not, as it is claimed, new and distinct entities, unrelated to what the Stoics say about the Ideas. Such a reading relies on decontextualizing one of our key source-texts about concepts and the Stoic critique of the Platonic Ideas:

⁹³ Stob. *Ecl.* 1.10.16a.8.

⁹⁴ E.g. S.E. *M.* 7.119, 9. 364–5, 10.258.

⁹⁵ Cf. CASTON 1999 p.176ff.

these [the concepts] are called by the ancients, Ideas. For the Ideas are of the things which fall under the concepts [...] It is these, of which the Stoics say that they do not obtain.⁹⁶

According to the eliminativist reading, the last term '*anuparktous*', 'that which cannot obtain', is dissociated from serving as a characterization of concepts, and is taken to describe the net nullification of the Ideas (as argued by Victor Caston 1999 p.178). However, from the way in which the anaphoric pronouns knit the passage together, such a reading seems incongruous: for the subject of 'that which cannot obtain' is not mentioned as 'the Ideas' but appears as the anaphoric pronoun 'these' ('*tautas*') which, though it picks up the term 'the Ideas' from the previous sentence, refers to 'the Ideas' as having been, in that clause, assimilated to concepts. The whole passage concerns, not two detached discussions, one focusing on concepts, the other on the Platonic Ideas, but one and the same topic of discussion, namely that the Stoics substitute the Platonic Ideas with their notion of a concept. This substitution leads to a radical ontological reshuffle whereby the Ideas, now understood as concepts, 'cannot obtain'. They are '*anuparktous*', a term which, naturally, also qualifies concepts, which are what Ideas, according to the Stoics, actually come down to.

In addition, we find the parallel use in S.E. of '*anupostata*', which is the twin term to designate what is not even incorporeal (cf. n.92 above). The verbal adjective in S.E. directly qualifies the not-somethings (*outina*), which are the concepts. This furthermore corroborates reading Stobaeus as attributing '*anuparktous*' to concepts as their non-status of not-obtaining. It certainly does not warrant an account of the Stoics as simply getting rid of the Ideas. This is important because familiarity with the Stoic corpus shows that the Stoics are in a constant dialogue with Plato about the Ideas. One of the particular concerns, to which the introduction of *lekta* is one answer, is how to accommodate the various roles the Platonic Ideas fulfil in Plato's ontology once the special status of the Ideas is denied.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Stob. *Ecl.* 1.12.3.4–8: 'ταῦτα [i.e. ἐννοήματα] δὲ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχαίων ιδέας προσαγορεύεσθαι. Τῶν γὰρ κατὰ τὰ ἐννοήματα ὑποπιπτόντων εἶναι τὰς ιδέας, [...] Ταύτας δὲ οἱ Στωϊκοὶ φιλόσοφοί φασιν ἀνυπάρκτους εἶναι'.

⁹⁷ The Stoics, generation after generation, pay continuous attention to the status of the Ideas: see the list in Syrianus in *Met.* 105.15–26 of the many answers to what the Ideas are for various Stoic thinkers, from Cleanthes, Chrysippus, Archdemus, to Marcus Aurelius, mentioning Longinus in passing as well—the last appears to be the odd one out, but this mention echoes other testimonies in Longinus of at least an interest in and acquaintance with Stoic logic and language, which could explain his being—perhaps over-hastily—lined up amongst the Stoics. For Longinus seems to have borrowed or been inspired by some Stoic terminology: for instance in Longinus *Subl.* 15.1.4 with expressions such as '*ennoēmata*' ('concepts'), described as 'subsisting, ready for speech' ('*logou paristamenon*'), which are distinctive echoes of a description of *lekta* (however imprecise, confusing concepts and *lekta*)—but it is Longinus' appeal to the particular status conferred by subsistence which seems to be the reason why Syrianus, in the passage mentioned, *Syr. in Met.* 105.25–6, cites Longinus as having claimed that the Forms are 'analogous to *lekta*' in virtue of their status as 'subsisting in the mind' ('*παρυφίσταται τῷ νῷ*'). For

3.3. THE ROLES OF THE PLATONIC IDEAS REDISTRIBUTED IN STOIC ONTOLOGY

The derivation of concepts from the Platonic Ideas is but one aspect of the Stoic analysis of the Ideas. For various functions which the Ideas have in Plato are distributed over the spectrum of existing and non-existing items within the Stoic ontological framework. Thus, for their universality, the Ideas are reinterpreted as mental concepts. As to their capacity for agency, as we have seen, it is taken over by bodies. Their incorporeal status is reinterpreted through the role the Stoics assign to their incorporeals. For their constituting the reference of what gets said,⁹⁸ the Stoics recognize and introduce into ontology, *lekta*, which are states of affairs, the content of speech and thought.

A question raised repeatedly by S.E. enables us to draw out the distinctions between the ontological status of the incorporeals and the mind-dependent concepts, and in particular to bring out the originality of the Stoic notion of *lekta*. It is a question dear to the sceptic, since it is one ultimately aimed at showing that there is no way of being sure that there is knowledge. It is a question which concerns the object of teaching, asking what can be taught, and subsequently, how it is taught. An assessment of the possible objects of teaching suggested by the different schools is systematically refuted. There is nothing to teach, therefore, nothing to learn, and hence nothing to know. The

Syrianus, Longinus is wrong because Syrianus considers subsistence as describing non-existence; but this is not how Longinus is thinking of subsistence, which he seems to assimilate to a special ontological status. As Malcolm Heath reminds me in conversation, this in no way indicates any deep familiarity with Stoic logic or the theory of *lekta* in Longinus, and reveals an anachronistic reading by Syrianus of Longinus' use of vocabulary. Rather, the recognizably Stoic expressions in Longinus are fitted into a Platonizing account (in *Subl.* 15 in particular) of how to express, in words, what one perceives; see WATSON 1988 p.217f. and BRISSON & PATILLON 1994 for more on this heterodox background in Longinus. It is, in any case, not so incongruous of Syrianus to have included Longinus as a source for Stoic thought about concepts and their Platonic inheritance, since Longinus appears to be one of the upholders of the assimilation of the Stoic claims into Platonizing frames of thinking about the Forms (though not a defender of Stoic theory), on which see also FREDE 1990. Longinus thus counts as a further witness to Stoic dialogue with Platonism and the attempts by later Platonists at assimilating Stoic ontology into Platonism.

⁹⁸ In Plato's *Sophist*, for example, speech-*logos* is, at a first stage, considered as the binding together of Ideas: 'διὰ γὰρ τὴν ἀλλήλων τῶν εἰδῶν συμπλοκὴν ὁ λόγος γέγονεν ἡμῖν', 'for us, speech comes to be from the interweaving of the Ideas with one another' (Plato *Soph.* 259e5–6). Without entering into details here, the example shows that there is a first suggestion made by the Eleatic Stranger in the dialogue, once he turns to an analysis of speech, to consider speech as that which mirrors a relation between the Ideas. This is a first suggestion before the elements of a *logos* are subsequently analysed into name and verb (cf. *Soph.* 262a1ff.). These passages are discussed further at 5.1.1 and 9.1.6 below. The point made here is that, on a Platonic view of the Ideas, the latter play a certain role in speech: the name (*onoma*) of things is the name of the Form applied either directly to the Form, in naming it, or indirectly, in naming the things which 'have' the Idea, e.g. *Phaed.* 103e2–7. See ALLEN 1960 p.149ff.

question of what can be taught is posed, in other words, all the better to refute all dogmatic views about the possibility of teaching in general.

The question is treated several times throughout S.E.'s works, with answers given with varying degrees of detailed alternatives.⁹⁹ As the investigation proceeds, the focus is narrowed down to ever more specific candidates recognizably belonging to Stoic doctrine. S.E. thus draws up a basic map of Stoic ontology, since the items he systematically refutes are items distinctly belonging to Stoic ontology. S.E. first asks whether it is somethings (*tina*) or rather not-somethings (*outina*) which will be taught (*M.* 1.15). He proceeds by taking up the case in which it is somethings which are the candidate objects of teaching, and the alternative then becomes one between corporeals and incorporeals. The Stoic answer is incorporeals. The next question is which incorporeal—a question that leads to considerations about the ultimate candidates, and the focus of S.E.'s refutations, namely *lekta*.

A closer look at these alternatives will be helpful in drawing up the Stoic ontological framework and the specificity of the status of *lekta* within it.

3.3.1. What is Taught: Something

The question of what is teachable (*didakton*) is a question familiar from the Platonic corpus.¹⁰⁰ S.E. broaches the question on the basis of a recognizably Platonic distinction between what-is (*to on*) and what-is-not (*to mē on*)—a distinction familiar from the Platonic texts, marking out the Forms, as what is, from their diametrical opposites.¹⁰¹ S.E. refutes both options and moves on to 'those who speak of somethings (*tina*) and not-somethings (*outina*)' (*M.* 1.15–17). Just as the Platonic distinction frames a deep ontological divide, crucial to Platonic ontology, the divide between something and not-something refers to a fundamental distinction for the Stoics: between what is real (or what is minimally real) and what is not real at all. The question for the Stoics is whether it is something or not-something which can be taught. But it cannot be not-somethings, S.E. explains, because what is taught is necessarily some sort of thing, such that a not-something would have to turn out to be a something after all, which is impossible, because it is a not-something. S.E. is bringing out here—however mockingly—the subtle and problematic

⁹⁹ S.E. *PH* 3.258, *M.* 1.10–18, 1.29–30, 11.219–31ff.

¹⁰⁰ As in the *Protagoras* or the *Meno* whose argumentative motors are whether virtue can be taught, or the *Republic* as in which the Form of the Good is the greatest object of learning ('*meizōn mathēma*', *Rep.* 505a2).

¹⁰¹ See Plato *Rep.* 476e7–477a5: 'if someone knows something, it is a knowledge of something (*ti*) and not of nothing (*ouden*)', but granted that it is something, 'is it of something which is (*on*) or something which is not (*mē on*)?' It will have to be of what is, given that what is not is 'utterly and in no way knowable'.

distinction the Stoics are banking on with the peculiar notion of a not-something (*outi*).

For there is a sense in which not-somethings (*outina*) are not nothing at all. The Stoics mark the difference between nothing at all (*ouden*) and the rarer form of the negative pronoun *outi* (hence our own deliberately odd rendering as 'not-something'). There is no plurality of nothing, and indeed there is no plural of the pronoun '*ouden*'. But there can be many not-somethings, as the plural form '*outina*' testifies.¹⁰² There should therefore be room to say that a not-something is still some sort of thing, as opposed to nothing at all, but if this were so, as S.E. does not fail to point out, a not-something would indeed be a something, which is self-contradictory. The attempt at introducing not-somethings would thus fail. The Stoics have an answer to this: they emphatically describe the not-somethings as 'quasi-somethings' ('*hōsanei tina*', D.L. 7.61). That is to say that, as mental items, the *outina* are not nothing at all, but fall short of somethinghood. This is the non-status which is described by the qualification of the *outina* as '*anupostata*', not even subsisting. This is the basis for the distinction between things and not-somethings. As entirely out of the realm of the extra-mental things, not-somethings are discarded as candidates for what can be taught, but they are not, for all that, removed from the picture. For, granting that it is somethings, *tina*, which get taught, it remains to be seen how the somethings can be taught: namely whether by means of somethings (*dia tōn tinōn*) or not-somethings (*dia tōn outinōn*) (M. 1.17).

That not-somethings are *anupostata*, do not subsist, ultimately disqualifies them from being the means, as well as the objects, of teaching. This leaves the somethings. S.E.'s refutation consists in an appeal to a regress *ad infinitum*, which arises when something is taught from something since the latter something, itself, is taught from something which is taught from something, and so on. In order to learn something, there is always something else which must be taught.¹⁰³ The relative success of the refutation is not our concern here. What is important for our purposes is the stringency of the distinction which S.E. belabours in response to the insistence on it by the Stoics. It is not a contraposition of two opposites for the mere sake of argument. S.E. reveals as much by addressing in detail what is at stake with the distinction.

¹⁰² On the play on the indefinite pronouns, see FREDE 1974 pp.56–60 and SEDLEY 1985 p.87f. The Stoics are famously connected with the *Outis* (not-someone)), or Nobody Argument, aimed at refuting the existence of the Ideas, shown to be precisely not-somethings, cf. Simplicius in *Cat.* 105.8ff.; Elias in *Cat.* 178.4; D.L. 7.187. The argument is named after Ulysses tricking the Cyclops by telling him his name is *Oὔτις*, No-one (Homer *Odyssey* 9.366f.). The accent of the pronoun, no-one, *oὔτις*, changes to *οὐτίς*, which is the basis for a play on words which is rendered in translation as the shift from 'no-one' to 'not-someone'.

¹⁰³ S.E. M. 1.18 and S.E. PH 3.257.

S.E. has not got the strict understanding of somethings as incorporeals in mind, for he goes on immediately afterwards to distinguish somethings into bodies and incorporeals.¹⁰⁴ But in emphasizing that not-somethings are *anupostata*, that they do not even subsist, S.E. thereby indicates what is the minimal marker of a something, in that it must at least subsist.

3.3.2. What is Taught: an Incorporeal

In the following section of the text, S.E. considers a new alternative: whether it is bodies or incorporeals which can be taught. It cannot be body. For body is either sensible (*aisthēton*) or intelligible (*noēton*). If it is the former, it need not be taught, since sense-perception comes to us naturally (*phusikōs*); if it is the latter, it is not a body but an incorporeal, for what is intelligible is an incorporeal.¹⁰⁵ It must be the incorporeal, but what kind of incorporeal?

When S.E. comes to disqualifying the incorporeals (*M.* 1.28), his main point of contention is the very uncertainty regarding their status, since different schools of thought disagree on what is incorporeal:

whichever be the incorporeal one claims is taught, whether it is the Platonic Idea, the Stoics' *lekton*, or place, void or time or anything else of such kind¹⁰⁶

S.E. concludes that, given the unsettled state of the debate about incorporeals, incorporeals are not worth considering as possible objects of teaching. But for us, here, the list he gives is illuminating.

Three different examples are distinguished by means of an 'or', which sets out alternatives, each of which is presented as an equally plausible candidate for incorporeality. The Ideas for the Platonists, *lekta* for the Stoics, and a third option, in which we find space, time, and void, grouped together as what is more generally (i.e. across the board) accepted to be incorporeal. For, though spoken of in different ways and by different people, space, time, and void are commonly acknowledged as not bodies, or not body-like. In being thus commonly accepted as incorporeal, one thing is clear, namely that the notion of incorporeal thus generally attributed to space, time, and void is a very loose one, with no specific implication on the status of these items, save for their

¹⁰⁴ On the progressive structure of the text: PASQUILINO 2006 p.334 (end).

¹⁰⁵ This is the main claim developed in *S.E. M.* 1.19–27, where he himself refers his reader to his other works on body for more details, namely to *S.E. M.* 9.359ff., along with *PH* 3.38.

¹⁰⁶ At *S.E. M.* 1.28: 'ὁποῖον ἂν τις ἀσώματον λέγῃ διδάσκεσθαι, εἴαν τε τὴν Πλατωνικὴν ἰδέαν, εἴαν τε τὸ παρὰ τοῖς Στωϊκοῖς λεκτόν, εἴαν τε τόπον ἢ κενὸν ἢ χρόνον ἢ ἄλλο τι τῶν τοιούτων'. A similar formulation at *S.E. M.* 11.230–1, with identical conclusion from S.E., that the controversy about which of these is actually an incorporeal is too great to consider incorporeals as possible candidates for teaching. The list is not exhaustive (*S.E.* does not mention, for example, the Pythagorean numbers, whose incorporeality is discussed elsewhere, cf. *S.E. M.* 9.364–5).

being somewhat set apart as a group from other items of an ontology they contrast with.

S.E. reserves a distinct place for the incorporeality of *lekta* precisely because, unlike place, time, and void, *lekta* are not recognized across the schools as incorporeal, but only by the Stoics. But what is specific to the Stoics—and which, in S.E.’s deliberately disordered list, is muted—is that the Stoics say that *lekta*, void, space, and time are all incorporeals, according to one specific way of understanding what it is to be incorporeal. Therefore they are all incorporeal in the same way. S.E. here (at *M.* 1.28) is throwing in, pell-mell, various items associated with incorporeality which are contrasted, rather than intended to form a unified account. The group ‘space, time, or void’ is tied together by the disjunctive ‘or’, but in passages specifically relating the account of incorporeals in Stoicism, the canonical four are coordinated by a binding ‘and’ (*‘kai’*):

they enumerate four kinds of incorporeals, namely *lekta* and void and place and time¹⁰⁷

It is the particularity of the Stoics to consider that space, time, and void, together with *lekta*, are incorporeal. This immediately alters the loose attribution of ‘incorporeal’ to space, time, and void, so as to align their incorporeal status with that of—what even S.E. acknowledges—is a particular status granted to *lekta*. The emphatic use of ‘and’ (*‘kai’*) in the presentation of the canonical four incorporeals acquires a particular force. For it indicates that all these items, for the Stoics, are incorporeal according to one and the same understanding of the notion of an incorporeal. This is not the case in the passages mentioned above, in which the problem raised is precisely that there is no uniform understanding of ‘incorporeal’. What this means for the Stoics is that the incorporeal status which characterizes *lekta*, characterizes equally space, time, and void such that their status is specific to Stoicism, and not interchangeable with anything found in other contexts—though their incorporeality might be referenced in alien other contexts. For example, when void is said to be incorporeal by the Stoics, this is not to be understood in the same way as is, say, Epicurus’ account of void as incorporeal (more on this in 6.4 below). This also works the other way around, namely that the account of the status of space, time, and void which is mapped out by the Stoics must be equally valid for *lekta*. This is crucial in beginning to retort to the critics, who hold that there is a lack of unity in amongst the Stoic incorporeals. S.E., with his heteroclit list of incorporeals, sets down the basis for that line of critique by separating *lekta* from space, time, and void, and considering only *lekta* as marking a peculiar Stoic understanding of ‘incorporeal’. He does this in

¹⁰⁷ S.E. *M.* 10.218: ‘τῶν δὲ ἀσωμάτων τέσσαρα εἶδη καταριθμοῦνται ὡς λεκτὸν καὶ κενὸν καὶ τόπον καὶ χρόνον’.

passages in which he is, more broadly, attacking all dogmatic schools of thought. When he discusses the Stoic account of incorporeality in its specifics he is more precise.

Yet S.E.'s pell-mell list is nevertheless helpful for our investigation because the Stoic *lekta* are put on the same level as the Platonic Ideas, in virtue of their being considered as incorporeal within their respective ontological structures. The specificity of the internal ontological dynamics, determined by the presence of *lekta*, is thereby broached. Of course the two ontologies in question differ greatly one from another, not least when it comes to the place given to the Ideas. As we have seen above, the Platonic Ideas, which, for the Platonists, are the most real, or the only real entities, are, on the Stoic view, relegated to mind-dependent concepts.¹⁰⁸ But by integrating incorporeals within a structured multi-layered ontology, the Stoics show how much they are influenced by Plato even as they carry out such a deep ontological reshuffling.

This is, in essence, the rebuke the Stoics receive from Plutarch: the Stoics, in contrast to the Epicureans—according to Plutarch—actually maintain a two-tiered ontological structure. They only claim that they do not (according to Plutarch) because of the inferior status of the four incorporeals (Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1116B; see 3.2.3 above). Plutarch has a good insight into the Stoic ontological framework, but is also too Platonically biased to read the map as it is. For the Stoics maintain, as Plutarch says, a line of continuity from Plato with a two-tiered ontology. But along with the reversal of the place of the Ideas there also comes a rethinking of the internal dynamics between the two modes of reality: no longer as hierarchically ordered, but rather considered as parallel. For just as the status of bodies as existing is reconfigured with respect to the Platonist view of body, or the sensibles, the status of the incorporeals is remotivated, not as superior or inferior, but as on a par with the existent bodies. This is what Plutarch cannot take into account, and he therefore erroneously accuses the Stoics of masking an ontological hierarchy which they in fact retain. Plutarch's misreading can to some extent be explained in view of traces of a dialogue with Plato in the rebooted Stoic account of the incorporeal.

3.3.3. Incorporeality: from Plato's Ideas to the Stoic Four Incorporeals

Concepts do not exhaust the reinterpretation and integration of the Ideas into the Stoic *systema*. In Plato, or at least according to a certain interpretation of Plato from Aristotle onwards, the universality of the Ideas is supported by, and associated with, their incorporeality, which guarantees their status of being

¹⁰⁸ Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 882E: 'Οἱ ἀπὸ Ζήνωνος Στωϊκοὶ ἐννοήματα ἡμέτερα τὰς ἰδέας ἔφασαν', 'the Stoics, following Zeno, said that our Ideas are concepts'.

most real, separated from what is subject to generation and corruption.¹⁰⁹ The Stoics dissociate universality from incorporeality in their analysis of the Ideas. Since the Stoics never talk of universals as such, but of genera and species (D.L. 7.60), they dissociate the mental capacity to generalize over experiences and form generic concepts from the status of incorporeality which genera and species do not have. But the Stoic notions of both a concept and an incorporeal are re-interpretations of the Ideas: as universals, the Ideas are nothing more than mind-created concepts, which are thus inside the mind and out of reality (as not-somethings). As incorporeal items, the independent status of the Ideas is reinterpreted as the Stoic incorporeals, characterized by their independent ontological status outside the mind and in reality.

The distinction between the mental and the extra-mental settles one side of the question of the status of incorporeals. But it is not enough to claim the incorporeals are present in reality. The relation to the bodies must be configured for the status of the incorporeals to be properly constitutive of reality—lest the recurring critique should prevail, namely that the incorporeals are an adjunct to an already pre-established ontological structure. In part, rooting the incorporeals to the structure of reality is an appropriation (and re-interpretation) by the Stoics of a terminology used in Platonic texts to describe the Ideas: namely the use of the preposition '*para*' (with the accusative), and the prefix '*para-*', along with a Stoic reconsideration of the notion of separation.

Let us first look at the use of '*para*' in Plato and in the Stoics. The Platonic Ideas are described as existing '*para*' the sensible bodies, e.g. in the *Phaedo* (74a9–12), where the Equal itself is said to be a different kind of item, '*para*', 'distinct from', and indeed over and above, the equal sticks and stones. Aristotle picks up on this use when he speaks of the Ideas as '*para tas aisthētas*', 'apart from the sensibles'.¹¹⁰ The translation of the preposition and prefix must include, in these contexts, both the idea of distinctness and that of being supernumerary, or being over and above the sensibles which relate to them, but which the Ideas do not, essentially, relate to in return. The question of the independence of the Ideas from the sensibles is, of course, much more complex than this brief summary,¹¹¹ but here we are focusing on a terminological point which can be isolated within the sea of questions. Moreover, in assessing what the Stoics relate to in particular, it is the terminological point, and the configuration it brings along with it, which seem to be important. The doxographical tradition, furthermore, aspiration which aims at highlight the most distinctive trait of a given view, corroborates the

¹⁰⁹ E.g. Arist. *Met.* 13.4, 1078b30–4; see further RENEHAN 1980 p.131ff.; FINE 1998 p.45ff.

¹¹⁰ See Arist. *Met.* 13.4, 1078b16, 13.9, 1086b8.

¹¹¹ Cf. FINE 2003a pp.262–4, 276.

focus on '*para*' as epitomizing the Platonic way of placing the Ideas above and beyond the sensibles.¹¹²

The Stoic appreciation of this usage is found in precise contexts, in which the prefix '*para*-' is added to the verbs '*huphistanai*' and '*huparchein*', which designate the status of the incorporeals. Thus the *lekton*, as we have already seen, is described as '*paruphistamenon*', 'subsisting alongside' our thought (at S.E. M. 8.12); as the articulated content of rational impressions, the *lekton* is what 'subsists in propositional form' ('*logōi parastēsai*', at S.E. M. 8 70, cf. 2.24 above). Place is said to '*paruphistatai*', 'subsist alongside', bodies (in Simplicius in Cat. 361.10–11). As for *katēgorēmata*, which are incomplete *lekta*, they are not goods (which are corporeal) but '*parakeimena tois agathois*', 'lie alongside the goods' (Stob. Ecl. 2.7.11f.6). Seneca (Ep. 117.5) has his own version of the relation of *katēgorēmata* to bodies, describing the *katēgorēma* as '*id quod contingit*', 'that which comes about in addition'. Framing the same ontological distinction between an incorporeal *katēgorēma*, such as [to be wise] and a corporeal, such as wisdom, we find the preposition '*para*' used to describe the *katēgorēma* as that which 'is considered as distinct but accompanying (for *para*) the possession of a good'.¹¹³

The emphasis on the prefix echoes the Platonic formulations, but with a change of direction. Its use in Stoic contexts, both as preposition and as prefix, at crucial points in the discussion of the status of Stoic incorporeals, is aimed at marking a clear distinction between the incorporeals and the corporeals. It is a distinction which helps all the better to set out the terms of a parallel relation to bodies, hence my translation in the last passage of '*para*' as 'distinct but accompanying'. There is a compresence of the incorporeals and bodies which is reaffirmed by the insertion of '*para*'. The emphasis contributes to setting out the equally constitutive role of incorporeals in the cosmos, alongside bodies. The Stoic usage of '*para*', as preposition and prefix, thus retains from the Platonic contexts its connotation of distinctness. But the Stoic remodelling of the Platonic ontology brings with it a reconsideration of the terms of the distinction. Thus '*para*', in a literal way, indicates that bodies and incorporeals are set out side by side.

It is crucial for the Stoics to ascertain the ontological independence of the incorporeals, all the better to ground this levelled-out two-tiered ontology. S.E. again enables us to gauge the transformative distance from the Platonic account to the Stoic account of the incorporeals when he talks of the

¹¹² See Stob. Ecl. 1.12.2a on Plato's account of the Ideas, which are: '*παρὰ πάντας γὰρ ἀνθρώπους ἀνθρωπὸν τινα νοεῖσθαι καὶ παρὰ πάντας ἵππους ἵππον καὶ κοινῶς παρὰ τὰ ζῷα ζῷον ἀγένητον καὶ ἀφθαρτον*', 'thought of as Man over and above each and every man, Horse, over and above all horses, and generally, Animal over and above each and every animal, ungenerated and indestructible'.

¹¹³ Stob. Ecl. 2.7.6f.3–4: '*τὸ φρονεῖν, ὃ θεωρεῖται παρὰ τὸ ἔχειν φρόνησιν*', 'being wise is what is considered distinct but accompanying the possession of wisdom'.

incorporeals, and in particular of *lekta*, as ‘separate’ (*kechōristai*). The *lekta* are described by S.E. as ‘separate’ from the expressions which express them and the bodies they are related to, that is to say the bodies they ‘subsist alongside’ (*parastēsai*).¹¹⁴ There is a mix here of recognizably Stoic terminology (‘the signifying expression’, ‘the thing itself’, ‘subsisting alongside’) and something familiar from Plato, but probably alien to the Stoic vocabulary, namely the use of ‘separate’, in order to express the distinction of the incorporeal from the corporeals (sound and external thing).

The Stoics, in our available sources, talk of separation when it comes to the separation of the soul from the body, as a proof of the corporeality of the soul (for only a body can get ‘separated’ from another body), as also with reference to the corporeality of the cosmos from which nothing can be separated because it constitutes one unified body.¹¹⁵ What we have in this passage is S.E.’s attempt at clarifying the peculiar Stoic view by having recourse to a more familiar vocabulary from the Platonic-Peripatetic sphere. For it is often as ‘separate’ that the Platonic Ideas are spoken of.¹¹⁶ S.E. transfers the Platonic notion of separation over to the Stoics; but the notion undergoes a transformation. From separation as indicating the above and beyond status of the Ideas, it is now used to describe how the Stoics carve a place in reality for incorporeals as distinct and therefore co-constitutive: bodies exist alongside incorporeals and incorporeals subsist alongside bodies. The Stoic criticism of the Ideas strikes thus in two ways, firstly in reducing the notion of a universal to no more than mental concepts,¹¹⁷ secondly in demoting incorporeality from existence as most real to, not an inferior status, but one parallel to and co-constitutive with bodies.

The continuity with the Platonic model lies in there being in both ontological frameworks, a distinct group of items, defined in direct contrast with corporeal items and considered to have a certain independent status from them. For this reason Platonic ontology constitutes a point of reference for the Stoics, but consistently in the role of negative counterpartmodel.

¹¹⁴ S.E. M. 8.75: ‘φασὶν οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς σκέψεως, τὸ εἶναι τι λεκτὸν ἀσώματον, ὃ κεχώρισται τῆς τε σημαίνουσας φωνῆς, οἷον τῆς “Δίων”, καὶ τοῦ τυγχάνοντος, καθάπερ αὐτοῦ τοῦ Δίωνος, πόθεν ἔχουσι παραστήσαι;’, ‘the Sceptics say: how can it be that the incorporeal *lekton* subsists, which is separate from the signifying expression, such as the word “Dion”, and from the thing itself, such as Dion himself?’

¹¹⁵ On the soul being separated from the body: Alex. in An. Pr. 180.31–3; Alex. Mant. 117.22 and elsewhere, cf. 3.1.1 with n.11 above. On the cosmos: Alex. Fat. 192.8–10, S.E. M. 9.78–9 (discussed in 1.3.5 above). More on separation in Stoicism at 6.1.1 below.

¹¹⁶ The Ideas are ‘separate’ (*chōris*) in Plato’s *Soph.* 248a7 and *Parm.* 129d6–8. Aristotle says Plato (and emphatically not Socrates) considers the Ideas as ‘separated’ (*ἐχώρισε*), see *Met.* 7.15, 1040a8–9ff., 13.4, 1078b31f., 13.9, 1086b4–7.

¹¹⁷ In the same vein of Stoic appropriation, and deformation of Platonic notions, it is worth noting the Stoic transformation of Platonic participation (*μετέχειν*): the Stoics say that ‘it is us [i.e. by our mental activity] who participate in the concepts’ (*τῶν μὲν ἐννοημάτων μετέχειν ἡμᾶς*’, in Stob. *Ecl.* 1.12.3.10.). See BRONOWSKI 2013 p.295f.; cf. 9.2.4 below.

The heterogeneity S.E. laments of the items said to be incorporeal (at *M.* 1.28) is counterbalanced by the continuity which S.E. himself traces from the Ideas to the Stoic incorporeal. For he both normalizes the qualification of the Ideas as incorporeal, and also insists on incorporeality as being what the Platonic Ideas have in common with the Stoics' incorporeals.¹¹⁸ It is furthermore the status of the Ideas, as not perceivable through the senses, and as separated from those objects which are perceived through the senses, which makes the Ideas, on Platonic doctrine, the real objects of learning and of knowledge.¹¹⁹ We are not concerned here with the mechanisms of Platonic epistemology (especially not in the epistemic relation the particulars have with the Ideas, in a theory of recollection (as it is presented, e.g., at *Phaed.* 74d9–75a3)). The point is rather a metaphysical one, namely the separate status of the Ideas in virtue of which they can be the proper objects of knowledge. This aspect is only one of many within the Platonic theory of knowledge. But for our present purposes it sufficiently brings to light that the status of incorporeality is a privileged status for the objects of teaching and acquisition of knowledge.

¹¹⁸ The Ideas are referred to as incorporeal at *PH* 3.152, *M.* 7.119, 9.364–5, 10.258, 11.230. The parallel with the Stoic notion of incorporeality is suggested at *M.* 1.28 and 11.230.

¹¹⁹ For example in Plato's *Phaedo* 65d11–66a8: this passage precedes the 'recollection argument' of the *Phaedo* (from 72e3 to 77a5) but is crucial to it both in constituting the assumption for the argument, i.e. positing the separate existence of the Ideas (at *Phaed.* 74a11–b1) and in pressing the point that what is perceived (which leads to recollection) is in some way deficient, and that the senses thus cannot be trusted (cf. *Phaed.* 74d6–7). Arguing that it takes a proper appreciation of the separate status of the Ideas in order to acquire, i.e. to recollect, true knowledge, see BEDDU-ADDO 1991, also SCOTT 1995 pp.65–85.

Rationality in Stoic Thought

Grasping *Lekta*

4.1. ORDINARY TEACHING: AN ADDITIONAL NOTE

In chapter 1 (1.1.4 above) we saw how the Stoics distinguish between transmission of doctrine (*paradosis*) and teaching (*didaskalia*). The distinction is important to bear in mind as we follow S.E.'s inquiry into what the Stoics say can be taught (*didakton*). The question appeals to an ordinary sense of teaching, as the terms *didaskalia* and *didakton* indicate, as opposed to the configured architecture, passed down by transmission of doctrine. The question here is not that of which topics are to be studied. S.E.'s inquiry focuses on the ontological question, the question of what there is in the world in the first place, which is there to teach. That is to say, what there is, understood as what part of the furniture of the world: bodies or incorporeal things? It is therefore a question that precedes questions about topics or disciplines (whether we are taught about playing the piano, or mathematics). It asks what it is that is communicated when we learn about playing the piano or mathematical axioms, namely whether that thing that passes from a teacher to a student is a body or an incorporeal.

The question pursued by S.E. enables us to delve more deeply into the question of ontological structure. The ontological reversal, by which the Platonic Ideas are dethroned and their various roles dispersed, yields an ontology in which there are no higher-status items. A direct consequence of this is that what there is to teach does not belong to a higher-order reality that is, if not utterly inaccessible, then attainable only by a choice cluster of philosophers. For whether teaching is to help a student recollect¹ or to

¹ The interrogation of the slave boy in Plato's *Meno* might appear to show that learning through recollecting is accessible to everyone, but there is a question with the slave boy whether, in effect, the recovery of a geometrical theorem, a paradigm for technical disciplines, can really be a valid example, transferable to the ethical realm which is the real concern of the dialogue (is virtue teachable?), which requires what SCOTT 1995 pp.66–71 terms a 'higher-order' kind of

inculcate a programme such as the one described in Plato's *Republic* book 7, Platonic ontology leads to realizing that what is taught, or at least what there is to teach, is the Forms. To learn, one has not only to come to be aware that what is real is the Ideas, but also embark on a daunting, if not impossible, enterprise in order to grasp them. It is so exacting an enterprise that Simmias in Plato's *Phaedo* (76b10–12) fears that after Socrates' death there will be no one left capable of giving an account of what he has learnt, i.e. recollected, of what the Forms are. Part of the difficulty in the pursuit of the knowledge of the Ideas is the necessity, in order to do so, of ridding oneself as much as possible of all that gets in the way, namely the body and in particular its deceiving perceptual faculties.² It is difficult to ignore the latter, and this is one reason why it is given to but a few people to actually learn and recollect. They are able to overcome the 'tendency to laziness' and resist their senses, as Socrates exhorts Meno to do (*Meno* 86b8–c1). But with the Stoics the ontological map changes completely. With bodies as the touchstone of reality, a basic requirement to acquire knowledge about them is to be able to perceive them, which all animated beings are naturally able to do. From obstacle to knowledge, perception becomes a viable tool.

It is in their possessing sense-perception that animals are distinguished from plants.³ But more than being merely a natural endowment, sense-perception, on Stoic doctrine, is properly constitutive, from the very start, of an animal's battle for life, enabling a living being to fulfil the first, vital, impulse towards its self-preservation. For sense-perception is the basis from which impressions come about.⁴ The first impression is the impression an animal has of itself, which will lead it to act in a certain way in order to preserve itself in the state it realizes it is in.⁵ As we have already seen, raw

learning. Thus DEVEREUX 1978 reads the *Meno* as distinguishing between two senses of teaching: (i) Meno's sense, also dubbed 'the *sophistical* sense' (p.120) through which knowledge is never actually attained because the object of teaching is always outside the pupil, transmitted from one person to another, and which at best results in true judgement, and which is the domain of the sophists; (ii) in contrast, there is Platonic recollection, which is what learning actually is and the only possible path to knowledge, the retrieval from within of the Forms.

² E.g. Plato *Rep.* 5, 476a9–c1, distinguishing the lovers of sights and sounds, and the philosophers.

³ D.L. 7.86; Hierocles 1.31–3: 'πάν ζῷον τοῦ μὴ ζῷου δυνὸν ἔχει διαφοράν, αἰσθήσει τε καὶ ὁρμῇ', 'each and every animal is different in these two ways from non-animals, in that the former have sense-perception and impulse'.

⁴ Sense-perception is distinct from the formation of impressions and conceptions, though they are both operations of the mind: see S.E. *M.* 7.307; Cic. *Acad.* 2.30; D.L. 7.52, and on these distinctions RUBARTH 2004. When we use the term 'mind' here instead of, or in parallel with, the term 'soul' (e.g. for concepts being *mind*-dependent), we thereby refer, in the wake of Cicero's '*mens*' (*Acad.* 2.30) to the Stoic way of differentiating the rational soul with its specific mental faculties, from the irrational soul of animals and more broadly speaking from the soul as principle of life of all animate beings, as distinguished above at 3.1.3.3 n.60.

⁵ See D.L. 7.85; Cic. *Fin.* 3.16, and the continuation of the passage quoted in n.3 from Hierocles 1.35f. and 1.5. See also LONG 1996b p.254ff. on 'instinctual self-perception' (p.257),

information, naturally perceived by the senses, is distinct from the impressions, which arise from them. Indeed, differentiating between the two notions of *aisthēsis* (sense-perception) and *phantasia* (impression) precedes further distinctions between rational and irrational impressions.⁶ The possibility, for animals, of having impressions at all relies on this differentiation, in that the impression corresponds to a—however basic—stage of registering information, provided by the senses.⁷ Thus, on first perceiving his master after twenty years' absence, Ulysses' aged dog receives some sensory information, which he perceives from the appearance of Ulysses in disguise, in such a way as to then have the impression of seeing his master, Ulysses, and not a stranger.⁸ This is not yet seeing the thing perceived as Ulysses, which would constitute a rational articulation of the impression's content, but it is a recognition of sense-data, which marks out a distinct stage away from the raw data itself. When it comes to the first impulse, which all animals (including humans) have towards self-preservation, this impulse is a manifest distinction between the raw material perceived and the impression—an impression that what is perceived is oneself. On this realization, on becoming 'aware of one's own constitution' (Sen. *Ep.* 121.5), we act on our impulses to preserve ourselves in the state thus perceived.⁹ For impressions lead to impulses, which are thus reactions to impressions.¹⁰ Our actions, or basic reactions, are thus set out on the basis of a perception of ourselves in reality. The reality we see ourselves in therefore must comply with how things really are, for this determines whether we survive or not. For we act according to our impressions, reaching out to what benefits us and fleeing from what will destroy us.

This basic Stoic tenet is brought to full fruition in the case of rational beings whose capacity to analyse perceptual data is such that not only can they react to reality as it is, in a beneficial way to themselves, but they are also capable of grasping truths, which constitute reality. For it is from the senses naturally

also BÉNATOUÏL 2007 p.24f. on the notion of '*usus sui*' (to make good use of oneself for oneself) in Sen. *Ep.* 121.6 and 9, which every animal is not only capable of, but devotes itself to.

⁶ The differentiation is a fundamental point of contrast, for the Stoics, with the Epicurean theory which takes all sensation, (*aisthēsis*), to be veridical. For the Epicureans, reason, (*logos*), is based on sensation, with no further intermediary such as the impressions are for the Stoics, see D.L. 10.31–2. See RUBARTH 2004, who analyses the distinction of sensation from impressions through a philological analysis of the Greek term '*aisthēsis*'. On the distinction being crucial also for irrational beings, see LABARRIÈRE 1993 p.237.

⁷ This is in direct opposition to the claim in BARNOUW 2002 p.149ff., for whom perceiving is already having an impression; indeed '*phantasia*' is translated there as 'perception'.

⁸ See the episode recounted in Homer's *Odyssey* 17.290–304. and the Stoic discussion of it reported in S.E. *PH* 1.68–9, which is followed by the Chrysippean musings over the 'dog as dialectician', see 2.2.4.1 above.

⁹ The first stage of *oikeiōsis*, or appropriation, thus involves a basic form of analysis of perceptual material in terms of a minimal appropriation of data by the perceiver, cf. LESSES 1998 p.22; KLEIN 2016.

¹⁰ See Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.9.1–5, on which see ANNAS 1992 p.92f.; ILDEFONSE 2011 p.7ff.

perceiving, 'taking in' ('*lambanein*' in S.E. *M.* 7.345) colour, flavour, sound, etc., that it is further possible for rational beings to convert the data into an articulate content. They thus have the impression that what they perceive is so-and-so, e.g. the impressions that strawberries are red, and that they taste sweet, and so on.¹¹ But rational beings start off as irrational beings, since rationality is developed over time.¹² As we have seen, the Stoic developmental view of the formation of human rationality relies fundamentally on sense-perception: for it is sense-perception that provides the basis for the formation of impressions. On the basis of an accumulation of our first impressions, we begin to form conceptions (*ennoiai*) of increasing complexity. What is perceived thus constitutes, in a great number of cases, a sound basis for knowledge, since it has the potential to provide all the required amount of trustworthy detail for the formation of a *kataleptic* impression:

from which [Zeno] conferred trust to the senses, since he thought that an apprehension [*'comprehensio'* for '*katalepsis*'] produced by the senses was both true and reliable¹³

The senses provide the raw sense-data. These in turn set in motion the process by which we have an impression whose content is a rational articulation of the sense-data. Thus any person with a properly functioning mind may have a grasp on reality as it is.¹⁴

The Stoics in this manner leave the possibility of learning open to everyone. In an emphatic contrast with the Platonic theory of knowledge, learning is open to the non-wise, i.e. practically everyone. And this indeed is in line with the Stoic concern, noted in chapter 2, to treat all rational beings as capable, if not of having knowledge, at least of acquiring true beliefs, which is the grounding of the Stoic notion of *katalēpsis*, the intermediate state between knowledge and total ignorance.

In this light, ordinary teaching plays a role on the path to rationalization, from basic sense-impressions to the formation of those kinds of impressions that can guarantee a grasp on reality. Thus, as we saw earlier (2.2.3 and 2.2.5 above), there are two methods by which we form our conceptions, one

¹¹ Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B–C; Cic. *Acad.* 2.21; and 2.2.3 above.

¹² Children are considered on a par with animals: see Galen on the Stoics in *PHP* 5.1.10 and 5.5.2; on the development of reason in children see Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B; D.L. 7.55; also Iamblichus on the Stoics reported in Stob. *Ecl.* 1.48.8.1–5.

¹³ Cic. *Acad.* 1.42: 'ex quo sensibus etiam fidem tribuebat, quod, ut supra dixi, *comprehensio* facta sensibus et vera esse illi et fidelis videbatur'; he presumably refers back to *Acad.* 2.19 with similar insistence on the Stoic view of trustworthiness in the senses in most cases. See S.E. *M.* 7.254, 258–60: the senses are trustworthy with a *caveat*, namely 'provided there is no obstacle (*enstēma*)'.

¹⁴ See Plut. frag. 215F: for the Stoics, the grasp on reality, which is achieved through our natural conceptions (*phusikai ennoiai*), acquired through experience of the senses, is framed as a Stoic response to Meno's paradox about knowledge, see on this BRITAIN 2005 pp.179–85.

through the experience of our sense-perception, the other through ‘instruction (*didaskalia*) and diligence’.¹⁵ The conceptions formed on the basis of sense-perception are said to arise ‘naturally’. These, the Stoics call ‘*prolēpseis*’ or preconceptions, a term we also find in the Epicurean corpus (D.L. 10.33, Epicurus *Men.* 124). For Epicurus, preconceptions arise naturally in that they are in agreement with sense-perception. Preconceptions are thus ‘*enargeis*’, clear and distinct, and are contrasted with *hupolēpseis*, judgements, in which some form of thinking or reasoning is involved, making these possibly false.¹⁶ There is thus an important difference between the Epicurean understanding of ‘naturally’ and the Stoic understanding. It is a difference which is brought to light by the Stoics’ contrasting teaching with what comes naturally. For Epicurus, the contrast is between non-intellectual sense-data and a judgement. In fact both the conceptions formed from sense-perception and the conceptions formed through teaching, for the Stoics, are based on an articulated content, which, for Epicurus, would count as an intellectual involvement and disqualify both from guaranteeing reliability.

The purport of ‘naturally’ here is best understood through the contrast between what comes about naturally, and what comes about through teaching and exertion. Acquiring the conception, say, of snow as white, comes about naturally through having experienced snow; acquiring the conception of snow as H₂O comes about by having been taught it, hence not naturally. The contrast is thus between experience (*empeiria*) and teaching. An experience, in the singular, covers a set of similar memory-traces.¹⁷ It is an open set which begins once there is more than one memory-trace: for a plurality, corresponding to the Greek *plēthos*, starts at 1 + n, and similarity begins with at least two samples to compare. Having been impressed by many objects (at least by two) which have (say) their being white in common, we possess a basic cluster of similar memory-traces of white. We then acquire the experience, the *empeiria*, of white. By contrast, neither plurality nor similarity play a role in the formation of conceptions through teaching (*didaskalia*). The text of the *Placita* as we have it does not contain more indications about what teaching, by contrast, consists in, apart from it being a distinct mode of acquisition of concepts. Instruction constitutes a receptiveness to external sources, distinct

¹⁵ Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B: ‘τῶν δ’ ἐννοιῶν αἱ μὲν φυσικῶς γίνονται κατὰ τοὺς εἰρημένους τρόπους καὶ ἀνεπιτεχνήτως, αἱ δ’ ἤδη δι’ ἡμετέρας διδασκαλίας καὶ ἐπιμελείας’, ‘some conceptions arise naturally in the aforesaid ways [through sense-perception] and undesignedly, others through our own instruction and diligence’.

¹⁶ See GLIDDEN 1985 and DYSON 2009 pp.1–5 and 111–28 on the contrast between the Stoic and Epicurean use of the term ‘preconception’.

¹⁷ The text is referred to in 2.2.5 n.62 above. For convenience’s sake, here it is in translation once more: Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B: ‘For when people perceive something, say white, they have a memory-trace of it once the thing itself has gone away. Once many similar memory-traces have come about, that is when we say we have an experience; for an experience is a plurality of similar kinds of impressions.’

from receptiveness to sense-data. That instruction is reinforced by ‘diligence’ or ‘careful attention’ (*epimeleia*) qualifies the kind of receptiveness, in which some degree of effort and discernment, over and above the passivity involved in sense-perception, is required.

The receptiveness involved in being taught is not something special, which would be the reward of a special effort. For the text is clear that teaching, alongside experience, are the two modes by which our reason develops. And develop it must. That is to say, the capacities to form impressions on the basis of sense-perception, and on the basis of what is taught, are necessarily triggered in all rational beings. There is nothing extraordinary in this; on the contrary, this is the basic and only way a rational being becomes the rational being he or she is. The question of what is taught, for the Stoics, is therefore the question of what is this distinct thing, which is external to us, and not delivered directly through the senses, but which we necessarily have access to. On the basis of this thing, we can form impressions and conceptions. The answer is, of course, *lekta*.

4.2. WHAT IS TAUGHT: *LEKTA*

It is not bodies, items which are accessible through sense-perception, which are taught, but *lekta*, non-perceivable, non-corporeal items:

a body is not taught, and this is emphatically so for the Stoics; for it is *lekta* which are the things taught, and *lekta* are not bodies¹⁸

The emphasis is on the differentiation of *lekta* from bodies, and thus on their incorporeal status. In his inquiry about what is, and can be, taught, S.E. proceeds by compiling requirements, in ontology, which the right candidate must possess. Thus, from the alternative between something or not-something, the requirement was that whatever is taught must have extra-mental reality, i.e. an independent ontological status. In the next alternative between something corporeal or something incorporeal, both candidates have that independent ontological status. In the quotation above, the distinction is made between two kinds of independent ontological status, specifying that *lekta* are not bodies. That is to say that, though they are not bodies, *lekta* have the kind of status required to be the thing taught. Thus the features that contribute to make the Platonic Ideas the exclusive objects of teaching and recollection, namely their ontological independence and their separation from body, are the features that enable ordinary

¹⁸ S.E. *M.* 11.224–5: ‘τὸ μὲν οὖν σῶμα οὐ διδάσκεται, καὶ μάλιστα κατὰ τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς· λεκτὰ γάρ ἐστι τὰ διδασκόμενα, σώματα δ’ οὐκ ἔστι τὰ λεκτά’; see also S.E. *M.* 1.20 and 8.409–10.

teaching to take place by means of *lekta*, i.e. the teaching by which we acquire conceptions, which are part and parcel of our rational development. It is thus necessary for us to acquire conceptions through ‘teaching and diligence’. Though there is a contrast between the ‘natural’ method, i.e. ‘without any technical know-how’ (*anepitechnitōs*), by which we acquire conceptions on the basis of sense-data, and the acquisition of conceptions through teaching, we cannot *not* make use of both methods. For just as we cannot not perceive, we cannot not grasp *lekta*.

It is precisely because they are incorporeal that *lekta* are the fitting objects of teaching. Why should it be *lekta*, rather than any other of the four incorporeals, space, time, or void? After all, they all equally meet the required criteria. Purely in terms of ontological status, two aspects mark out the *lekta*: for one, as we have already seen (cf. 2.2.6 above) *lekta* are the sort of things which come into association, or can come into association, with impressions. They correspond to the content of rational impressions. Secondly, there are many *lekta*, and each is distinct from the others. On account of the relation of *lekta* with impressions, *lekta* are the likeliest of the four incorporeals to be involved in teaching, insofar as teaching is a method by which we acquire conceptions, which are, as we have seen, a kind of impression.¹⁹ What is more, in the light of their multiplicity, *lekta* promise the student to come to be acquainted with the variety, diversity, and wealth of content, corresponding to the variety, diversity, and wealth of truths and states-of-affairs that constitute the cosmos. Indeed, multiplicity is what grounds the notion of the cosmic city for the Stoics:

they liken the cosmos to a city because of the multiplicity (*plēthos*) of what takes place in it, as also for the order and good arrangement of its administration²⁰

That the cosmos should be accounted for in terms of multiplicity and not simplicity and unicity is a counterpart of the rejection of the Platonic Forms. The emphasis, with the Stoics, is no longer on the common essences of the things, or their relation to the universal Forms, but, as we have it in the text, to ‘what takes place’ (*ta gignomena*). The order concerns the place of all the bodies in the cosmos; ‘what takes place’ are the states-of-affairs which occur through causal interaction. But the states-of-affairs are what the Stoics call *lekta*, the things which are there to be said, and that can be said. The relation of states-of-affairs to causation will occupy us in chapter 7. Here we are focusing on the appropriateness of *lekta* to be taught. They are appropriate in satisfying the requirements of incorporeality and ontological independence; but the very same requirements constitute a challenge to the theory. Being taught,

¹⁹ See 2.2.7.1 with n.88 above.

²⁰ Dio Chrysost. *Or.* 36.30–1: ‘πόλει προσεικάζουσι διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ γιγνομένων τε καὶ ἀπογιγνομένων, ἔτι δὲ τὴν τάξιν καὶ τὴν εὐκοσμίαν τῆς διοικήσεως’.

we have seen, is considered as a parallel mode of concept-acquisition to sense-perception. In virtue of the differences between these two modes, one question arises, namely how, since they cannot be acquired through perception, do *lekta* come into association with the learner such that he or she can be taught through *lekta*? The relation between teacher, pupil, and the object of teaching appears to be set in a somewhat complex ontological framework. For teaching, or learning, consists in the mind of the pupil entering, or made to enter into, some sort of relation with *lekta*.

What is taught arises in our minds in the only way something can arise in our minds, namely in the form of an impression. However, impressions are corporeal states of the corporeal soul. When a white piece of paper produces an impression on our minds, a sense-perceptible, corporeal item is acting on our corporeal mind so as to result in our mind's being impressed. We have discussed earlier the question of our rationalizing the content of the impression into an articulated content. But here we must focus on the initial arrival of the content in our minds. As far as sense-perception is concerned, there is a causal impact of the external object on the mind which results in our being impressed. But this is impossible when it comes to *lekta*. Incorporeals have no causal capacity. The challenge, for the Stoics, lies in producing an account which preserves the ontological independence of *lekta* and their extra-mental reality, whilst also explaining how the mind is impressed, i.e. receives an impression from a *lekton*, without the *lekton* being the cause of the impression. The *lekta* are extra-mental, for we are not taught things we conjure ourselves in our minds, especially given that there is nothing innate in our minds when we are born.²¹ But now the principal threat to the Stoic view is the Stoics' own strict attachment to the corporeality of causes.

4.3. LEKTA AND THE MIND

Lekta have so far been characterized in virtue of their incorporeality, which distinguishes them from the not-somethings, which are characterized as mind-dependent. For the most part, these are the conceptions, our storehouse of generic impressions.²² It is telling that the fervent defenders, in the literature, of *lekta* as mind-dependent or mental items disregard the separate considerations made about conceptions.²³ Bypassing the Stoics' distinction

²¹ Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B: when we are born, our 'minds are like a clean sheet of paper ready for writing upon'.

²² Fictional characters are sometimes added to the not-somethings, as in Sen. *Ep.* 58.1–5. See BRUNSCHWIG 1988 p.51ff.

²³ See NUCHELMANS 1973 pp.52–72; GRAESER 1978 p.90f.: the tendency is to consider *lekta* as mental items which constitute the meanings of words. In more recent scholarship ISNARDI-PARENTE

between incorporeals and not-somethings, has its own tradition, mostly of Peripatetic stamp, in which *lekta* are assimilated to ‘*noēmata*’ (‘objects of thought’). Thus Simplicius, summarizing the debate about whether Aristotle’s categories, or genera as they are called in these pages, are supposed to be mental concepts or things said, declares that:

clearly Aristotle meant them as [the ten genera] of things said (*ta legomena*), for things said (*ta legomena*) and *lekta* are mental concepts (*ta noēmata*), as was also the view of the Stoics²⁴

What are the *noēmata*, the objects of thought, for Simplicius? In the next sentence, Simplicius specifies that they concern ‘matters of the soul’ (‘*peri psuchēs pragmateias*’). In this, Simplicius follows a Peripatetic tradition of reinterpreting the Aristotelian ‘affections of the soul’ (‘*ta pathēmata tēs psuchēs*’, from the beginning of Aristotle’s *De Interpretatione*), as ‘*noēmata*’, objects of thought.²⁵ We shall discuss these amalgamations found in the Aristotelian commentators in greater depth at 6.3 below. They are due to the rejection, or plain misunderstanding, of the distinct account of the status of incorporeality set out by the Stoics. They show a preference to assimilate the Stoic account of incorporeality, and in particular of *lekta* as incorporeal, with elements from the Peripatetic tradition, rather than tackle the more complex questions of how to account for them, and what shifts in ontological structures they imply. We find, thus, in many different texts, reductionist accounts, according to which what ‘the ancients’ (i.e. Plato and Aristotle) called X, the Stoics are said to now call Y.²⁶ The incorporeality of *lekta* additionally plays in

2005 p.180 associates *lekta* with ‘purely mental’ concepts which are the significations of words. For BARNouw 2002 pp.168f. and 286–9, perceiving itself ‘is propositional’, i.e. perceiving consists itself in ‘predicating something of something’ and thus perceiving is to form *lekta* for ‘*lekta* are what is predicated’; the author here takes *lekta* to be mind-dependent because they are determined by the impressions. But see SCHUBERT 1994 pp.33–8 on the incompatibility of the subsistence (*huphistanai*) of *lekta* with an account of them as dependent on perception.

²⁴ Simplicius *in Cat.* 10.2–4: ‘ὅτι δὴ περὶ τῶν λεγόμενων ἔστιν, σαφῶς εἶπεν ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης, τὰ δὲ λεγόμενα καὶ λεκτὰ τὰ νοήματ’ ἔστιν, ὡς καὶ τοῖς Στωϊκοῖς ἔδόκει.’ More on the Peripatetic critiques and misappropriation of *lekta* in 6.3 below.

²⁵ Ammonius in the first pages of his *in de Int.* (5.29–7.14) recalls how the authenticity of Aristotle’s *De Int.* was questioned by Andronicus of Rhodes precisely because it seemed incorrect to the latter for *noēmata* to be interchangeable with the *pathēmata tēs psuchēs*; Ammonius proceeds to demonstrate the grounds, in the Aristotelian text, for the validity of interchanging the one with the other, and therefore, the authenticity of the text. Boethius *in de Int.* 2.11.13ff. recalls Alexander’s own response against Andronicus, also on the basis of a unified account of speech in Aristotle, as deriving from the affections in our soul; a little further down in Boethius, at *in de Int.* 2.12.18ff., it is Porphyry who is appealed to as explaining that *noēmata* are the *pathēmata tēs psuchēs*.

²⁶ This occurs not only within the Aristotelian tradition of commentators, as for example in Themistius *in An. Pr.* 92.3: what Aristotle called ‘*phōnai*’ the Stoics call ‘*lekta*’. But Plutarch, for example, is also sometimes guilty of such simplifications, e.g. Plut. *Plat. Quaest.* 1009C: what the ‘ancients’ called a ‘*protasis*’ (clause), is ‘nowadays’ called an ‘*axiōma*’: Plutarch is here speaking of the Stoics. More generally, the implication is that the Stoics use out of the ordinary words merely

favour of this line of the tradition, partly, as we have already seen, in that there is a tendency to misinterpret the Stoics' talk of concepts, assuming that these are incorporeal and thus that incorporeality must imply mind-dependency, but also because incorporeality is interpreted as indicating non-existence, hence a parasitical mode of subsistence on the mind, of items which can only be 'mere conceptions'.²⁷

The critique here, echoed by its modern exponents, concerns the status of incorporeality and affirms that nothing incorporeal can subsist independently from the mind. Therefore, so it is claimed, there is no place to make a distinction between not-somethings (*outina*) and somethings (*tina*), insofar as somethings (*tina*) also designate incorporeals. The resistance, in the sources, to make the distinction between mental concepts and *lekta* indicates that this is the crucial distinction the Stoics must defend. Moreover, the introduction of *lekta* becomes part of a debate about what is the mind and what is rationality. For in defending the view that *lekta* are distinct from mental items, and are thus mind-independent items, the Stoics claim that the mind is the sort of thing that enters in a relation with *lekta* (which are constitutive of reality, since they do not depend on our minds). Through this relation with *lekta* we form our conceptions, on the basis of which our reason develops. Thus rationality for the Stoics, consists in coming into a relation with *lekta*.

The effort of the Aristotelian commentators to bring the Stoics back into the fold, thus lays bare the differences between the Peripatetic tradition and the Stoics. We shall come up against those differences, and the debates thereby generated, repeatedly throughout the following pages. A passage from Ammonius' commentary on *De Interpretatione* testifies to the great shift from the Aristotelian schema to the Stoic view:

there need be nothing more to consider apart from these, between the thought and the thing, there, where the Stoics would place what they call a *lekton*²⁸

To disregard the shift, that is to say, to consider that the Stoic account must in some way be reconciled with the Aristotelian account, creates the difficulties and misunderstandings which pepper the tradition of the Aristotelian commentators whenever they discuss the Stoic view. The shift, however, is of great consequence as it sets out two very different ways of thinking about language

to say what has already been identified. We shall encounter this critique of uselessly over-complicated language a number of times in various contexts.

²⁷ This is how Proclus in *Tim.* 3.95.13–14 understands Stoic incorporeality, as the status ascribed to time: 'ὡς ἀδρανὴ καὶ οὐκ ὄντα καὶ ἐν ἐπινοίαις ὑφιστάμενα ψιλαῖς', 'as incapable of action, non-existent and subsisting in our thoughts alone'.

²⁸ Ammonius in *de Int.* 17.26–8: 'οὐδὲν ἕτερον δεῖ παρὰ ταῦτα ἐπινοεῖν μέσον τοῦ τε νοήματος καὶ τοῦ πράγματος, ὅπερ οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς ὑποτιθέμενοι λεκτὸν ἡξίου ὀνομάζειν'; on this passage see 6.3.1 below.

and rationality. The addition, as Ammonius puts it, of something else in between the thought and the thing makes for a different account of ontology, which has, as one of its direct consequences, a re-modelling of the relation of the mind to the world.²⁹ Of course, one of the difficulties for this tradition is to decide whether *lekta* are linguistic items, or mental items, or something else, distinct from language and the mind. In the latter case, *lekta* have no equivalents on the Aristotelian model. But *lekta* prove to be incompatible with the Peripatetic model. This further indicates that *lekta* are indeed distinct from language and the mind. At the same time, we must understand in what way *lekta* are also related to language and the mind. The mechanism of ordinary teaching, whereby what we are taught are *lekta*, is an entry point to find the answer.

4.4. WHERE DO IMPRESSIONS COME FROM?

4.4.1. The Gymnastics Teacher

In order to set out the way in which the corporeal soul can come into relation with incorporeal *lekta*, without the latter exercising any causal action on the mind, the Stoics compare the way rational impressions are formed with the way a gymnastics teacher instructs his pupils from a distance:

For they [the Stoics] say: just as the gymnastics trainer or drill-sergeant sometimes takes hold of the boy's hands to drill him and teach him to make certain motions, but sometimes stands at a distance and moves to a certain drill, to provide himself as a model for the boy, so too, some impressors touch as it were, and make contact with the mind to make their imprinting on it, as with white and black, and body in general; whereas others have a nature <...> such that the mind is impressed in relation to them, but not by them, such is the nature of the incorporeal *lekta*.³⁰

The gymnastics teacher (the *paidotribēs*) is a familiar character from Platonic dialogues. Alongside the grammarian and the music teacher, he is the teacher specifically in charge of the body, keeping it fit through gymnastics, and being

²⁹ See GRAESER 1978 p.88f. on this passage, as setting out the elements of differentiation of the Aristotelian and Stoic models.

³⁰ S.E. M. 8.409–10: 'ὥσπερ γάρ, φασίν, ὁ παιδοτρίβης καὶ ὀπλομάχος ἔσθ' ὅτε μὲν λαβόμενος τῶν χειρῶν τοῦ παιδὸς ῥυθμίζει καὶ διδάσκει τινὰς κινεῖσθαι κινήσεις, ἔσθ' ὅτε δὲ ἄπωθεν ἐστὼς καὶ πῶς κινούμενος ἐν ῥυθμῷ παρέχει ἑαυτὸν ἐκείνῳ πρὸς μίμησιν, οὕτω καὶ τῶν φανταστῶν ἕνια μὲν οἰοεὶ ψαύοντα καὶ θιγγάνοντα τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ ποιεῖται τὴν ἐν τούτῳ τύπωσιν, ὁποῖόν ἐστι τὸ λευκὸν καὶ μέλαν καὶ κοινῶς τὸ σῶμα, ἕνια δὲ τοιαύτην ἔχει φύσιν <...>, τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς φαντασιουμένου καὶ οὐχ ὑπ' αὐτῶν, ὁποῖά ἐστι τὰ ἀσώματα λεκτά'; translation with minor alterations by LONG & SEDLEY 1987 vol.1 27E.

often paired up with the doctor who is in charge of keeping the body fit through the art of medicine.³¹ His role is that of directing the body towards conforming with a certain codified way of moving. Indeed, if we follow the characterization of organized movement given by the Athenian Stranger of Plato's *Laws* (653d7–e5), it is the specificity of human beings, in contrast to animals, 'to have a sense of order and disorder in movement, which is properly called rhythm and harmony'.³² Beings endowed with reason have the capacity to capture, even in their bodily motions, laws of regularity and harmony, which are the expression of their reason—the capacity which is the one thing animals can never share in. In Plato's *Republic* (*Rep.* 7, 522a) Socrates thinks of gymnastics and the art of war as a good basis for coming to recognize true being (the Forms) by providing a notion of proportion, though it certainly is not knowledge of it, for which mathematics and further scientific training is required. This provides a sufficient background against which the Stoic example develops. The gymnastics teacher imparts to his pupils lessons of rationalization over their movements, much like any language, which is a codification of sounds or of movements according to an internal rationale. Again, in light of the Stoic rejection of higher realities such as the Forms, the kind of rationalization which gymnastics contributes to (which, for Socrates in the *Republic*, is but a habit of the body at best) is, on the Stoic view, a capacity of rational beings to conform to the rationality of the cosmos.³³ The Stoics identify, in what the gymnastics teacher imparts, two ways of acquiring an impression of the language of the body by the pupil.

The two approaches the gymnastics teacher takes in teaching how to carry out a movement, either by guiding the pupil through direct contact, or exemplifying the move at a distance, are illustrations of the two ways in which the mind receives impressions. Going by our original distinction from the *Placita*, in which some conceptions are formed on the basis of sense-perception, and others through 'teaching and diligence', teaching, properly speaking, for the Stoics, corresponds to the case of the gymnastics teacher giving instructions from a distance. In this case alone is the pupil properly said to be taught by the teacher, because something more than being impressed by

³¹ See Plato *Prot.* 312b1–4 about the place of the *paidotribēs* in the education of a free citizen, or Plato's *Gorg.* 452b6–7, 504a3–4.

³² Plato *Leg.* 653e3–5: 'τὰ μὲν οὖν ἄλλα ζῶα οὐκ ἔχουν αἴσθησιν τῶν ἐν ταῖς κινήσεσιν τάξεων οὐδὲ ἀταξιών, οἷς δὴ ῥυθμός ἐστι καὶ ἁρμονία'.

³³ The Stoics thus take the remark of the Athenian Stranger literally, from the above-quoted passage in the *Laws*: for the Stoics the 'aisthēsis', the 'sense of the order' of the world, is properly speaking the capacity to form impressions, which grasp that order. Lucian of Samosata, who, in his theoretical piece *On Dance*, claims that choreographed movement is 'the peak of all knowledge, [...] above even philosophy' (*Salt.* 35.7–10), retraces the history of the codification of choreography in the motion of the stars and the planets, which itself is a 'choreography' ('χορεία'), which is that of a 'well-ordered harmony' ('εὐτακτος ἁρμονία' *Salt.* 7.13), and is the model for human choreography, see more below in Appendix.

a sensation has occurred. When the teacher guides the pupil's movement with his own hands, the impression of the correct movement arises in the same way as the sight of something white does, through the causal imprinting of an external body on our soul. What the Stoics distinguish here is what they call a natural arising of the impression, which is distinct from the impression arising from teaching. Teaching is that which occurs through the communication and grasping of *lekta*. What has been communicated from a distance, when no direct contact has guided the pupil's movement, is a *lekton* (the *lekton* expressed by the movement carried out by the teacher). The pupil's mind is brought in relation with the *lekton*. And that has happened in a different way from the way an impression arises in the pupil's mind from having his limbs being guided by the teacher.

The question is what causes us to have an impression. In the case of the gymnastics trainer guiding his pupil's movement through touch, the impression arises through direct contact, which is the paradigmatic case for causal agency. Touch provides the conditions for one body to act on another. Thus, in our passage: 'some impressors touch as it were, and make contact with the mind to make their imprinting on it, as with white and black, and body in general'. The seemingly cautionary 'as it were' (*hoionei*) here introduces the explanatory sequence: touching, here, is to be understood as making contact with the mind, which is to be understood as making an impression on it. Thus, though it might not seem like the straightforward case of the snooker ball pushing another ball, this too is a case of touching, when a sense-impressor produces an impression on our mind. All sense-impressors are interchangeable as far as the mechanics of sense impression are concerned, the touch of the trainer is likened to how colours affect us, like any and every corporeal item.³⁴ The very action these sense-impressors are identified as performing, that of acting on our minds, is the proof of their corporeality. And indeed, on the basis of this characterization of qualified beings, qualities are bodies (cf. 3.2.1 with n.69). Just as we saw with white things in the *Placita* passage,

³⁴ Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900A makes a case for the Stoics being the first philosophers to hold that there are five and only five senses, the five that are familiar to us today: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. The doxographer compares the Stoics, Aristotle, and Democritus. Each philosophical school is distinguished not by the number of senses they identify but by the theories of perception they hold. It is the theory which determines the number of senses. Thus, in view of Aristotle's 'common sense' (*aisthēsis koinē*) (recognizable from e.g. *An.* 3.2, 425a27–8), described as the mode of perception by which forms are distinguished from within composites, Aristotle is not said to allow for a sixth sense, but rather as conceiving of perception in a different way from Democritus, for whom there are infinitely many modes of perception, different for humans, animals, and gods. What is important for our inquiry here is that the Stoics' regularization of the five modes of perception stands out in this context. The suggestion in these pages is that the Stoics are able to proceed in this way thanks to the corporealization of sense-impressors—a corporealization based on the criterion for activity described in 3.2 above, and supporting the view that the soul (of which the senses are one expression) is a body and therefore can be touched.

so it is with touch: the impression which arises is an impression of the impressor as the impressor it is: we have the impression that this thing is white, just as the gymnastics student has the impression that his arm, say (which has been moved by the teacher), must extend in such and such a way.

But the case of teaching is a case in which no contiguity is involved. A different explanation from the role of causal, physical, impressors in the first model is required. The case of the gymnastics teacher is a non-linguistic illustration of teaching. What is communicated is expressed through gesture all the while what is communicated is distinct from the body of the teacher and the body of the student. Two points are thereby made. Firstly, the example is emphatic, perhaps even somewhat provocative, for the human body is *par excellence* an active causal agent, and yet here the Stoics appeal to it as that which—by gesture alone—communicates, not through perception or any kind of causal agency, but by one body (the teacher's) expressing a *lekton*, and another (the student's) grasping the *lekton*. The student then forms an impression whose content corresponds to what has been communicated by specific gestures. This is as much as to say that there is a language of the body, which, when it is fine-tuned as here in gymnastics, or the art of combat (the domain of the drill-sergeant), is just as capable of articulating *lekta* as any other language such as mathematics, English, or Greek.³⁵ The second point, therefore, which follows from the first, is that *lekta* are not linguistic items.

Lekta are the kind of things which, if they are expressed, are expressed through an organized language. A person's mind can have an impression by entering in a relation with a *lekton*, thanks to the expressive medium in use, capable of revealing the *lekton*. It is clear therefore that this expressive medium follows an articulation determined by the *lekton* itself. That human beings are capable of producing languages, which thus reflect that articulation, is the anchor point for the rationality of human beings. Rationality, for human beings, consists in relating to something external to them, but which they are capable of expressing and grasping. Rationality is thus first and foremost a question of ontology, that is to say, a question of the relation between bodies, minds, and *lekta*. Indeed, *logos*-reason is an ontological, rather than epistemological, principle, insofar as it is the ordering and sustaining cause (as the rational soul, or *pneuma*³⁶), of the life and changes of the cosmos.

S.E. marks the difference between sense-impressors and 'things which have this sort of nature, namely that the mind is impressed in relation to them (*epi*),

³⁵ It is to the Stoics that BULWER 1644 p.95 appeals directly to bolster his theory of 'the natural language of reason' expressed by hand gestures, which has been considered an antecedent to sign-language, see WOLLOCK 1996; the development of a universal language of hand gestures ('*chirologia*') derives from Bulwer's concern with the relation of the bodies of rational beings to the rationality of the universe. Dance is also one such language of the body: see the Appendix.

³⁶ D.L. 7.139; Cic. ND 2.29; S.E. M. 9.75.

but not by them (*hupo*)'. The focus is on the nature, which, in this context, stands for the ontological status, of the originator of an impression, and whether the originator is the same thing as the content of the impression. It is the nature of incorporeal *lekta* which determines the relation the mind can have with them. The solution, on which the Stoics placed a great deal of weight, is the configuration of the relation of being impressed with relation to, *epi*, a *lekton*, in contrast with the relation of being impressed by, *hupo*, a body.

4.4.2. *Epi* and *Hupo* Impressions: a Difference in Kind?

S.E., as also more recent commentators, has judged the distinction between being impressed *epi* and being impressed *hupo* insufficient as an explanation of how we are taught *lekta* and how we have impressions arising from specific *lekta*.³⁷ There are indeed grounds to reproach the Stoics for being particularly unforthcoming here, and this may not be entirely due to the scantiness of our sources. S.E.'s own complaint follows directly from our quoted passage, in which he says 'that though the Stoics use a plausible example (*pithanon paradeigma*), they do not solve the question at hand'.³⁸ This seems to confirm that the case study offered, that of the gymnastics teacher, is indeed what the Stoics put forward as their explanation. S.E. reproaches the Stoics for giving a mere example, instead of arguing out the question (*sunagein*), further implying that the Stoics never provide anything more. This much was already implied by the way S.E. had introduced the gymnastics teacher's case. For S.E. says, in the line immediately preceding our passage: 'and they even try to justify their view by way of an illustration'.³⁹ The 'even' here translates an emphatic '*kai*', whose presence, whether strongly interpreted with 'even', or more understated with 'also', tends, on both readings, to suggest that the illustration is in fact as far as the Stoics go in providing an explanation. The illustration is thus the Stoics' explanation for how the relation of being impressed *epi*, as a non-causal relation, justifies that an incorporeal *lekton* can be at the origin of a reaction within the corporeal soul. However unsatisfactory this solution may appear, this is, in fact, a serious attempt at a solution from the Stoics. In this light it is worth taking the illustration seriously before surrendering to its 'mysteriousness'.

The use of the preposition *hupo* with the genitive introduces the agent of an action: being impressed *hupo*, by, something, indicates that something

³⁷ See LONG & SEDLEY 1987 vol. 1 pp.165 and 241, in which the distinction is said to be 'too mysterious to explain the process'. Similarly, SCHUBERT 1994 p.123f.

³⁸ S.E. M. 8.410: 'οἱ δὲ τοῦτο λέγοντες πιθανῶ μὲν χράνται παραδείγματι, οὐ συνάγουσι δὲ τὸ προκειμένον.'

³⁹ S.E. M. 8.409: 'Οἱ δὲ καὶ δι' ὑποδειγμάτων πειρῶνται τὸ ἀξιούμενον παραμυθεῖσθαι.'

endowed with the capacity for agency has acted on something else, the mind, but also that something capable of receiving the effect of that action, has indeed received it (see 3.1.3 above). But we can also have an impression *epi*, with the dative, in relation to something. This indicates that it is not that which triggers the impression that makes the impression a passivity of the soul, for an impression is the same kind of passivity whether it originates through an *hupo* relation or an *epi* relation. The impression is, by its very nature, a kind of passivity of the soul.⁴⁰ But *epi* and *hupo* are not contrasting ways of producing these passivities, but parallel, compatible paths by which minds have impressions. Therefore, being impressed *hupo*, as a parallel to being impressed *epi*, is not the relation which explains why an impression is a passivity of the soul. Being impressed *hupo* is thus not the paradigmatic description of the corporeal agent which affects the soul so as to produce impressions in it.

It is a main concern of Chrysippus to make it clear that the mind is not to be considered as 'literally imprinted on, as a wax tablet would be by a signet-ring' (S.E. *M.* 7.228–9). In his analysis of the mechanisms involved in our having impressions, Chrysippus appeals to a terminology emphatically expressive of an elasticity in the mind's polyvalent capacity to have concomitantly both contradictory impressions (e.g. at the same time the impression of triangular things and square things) and impressions of different types (e.g. sensory and non-sensory). As noted above (3.1.3.1 with n.48), Chrysippus argues against Cleanthes that, given this polyvalence of the mind, it is incorrect to consider impressions as literal imprints on the corporeal mind. Chrysippus analyses the notion of an impression as an 'alteration' (*'alloiōsis'* or *'heteroiōsis'*, S.E. *M.* 7.228–31) of the soul in order to accommodate the different kinds of impressions and avoid the constraining literality of the signet-ring type of imprint. But Chrysippus also thereby makes definite the passivity which is inbuilt in the very state of having an impression. As we have it in our *epi-hupo* passage, the state of being impressed is one of passivity, epitomized by the passive participle in *'to hēgemonikon phantasioumenon'*: the mind, or commanding faculty, is impressed upon. But this is what it is to have an impression, such that it is not of what the impression is that determines whether or not it is a passive state.

The impression is a passive state regardless of what it is of (a body or an incorporeal). What it is of, therefore, is not the causal agent which has produced the passivity. Chrysippus is concerned to avoid the pitfall of restricting the notion of an impression to that of the result of the activity of an external causal agent, which would also tie the content of the impression to that causal history. Having an impression is a 'kind of passivity' (S.E. *M.*

⁴⁰ See S.E. *M.* 7.161–2 and 2.2.7 above.

7.161–2). But it is a complex state, for it involves the articulation of its content according to a rational order, determined by our (more or less successful) capacity to arrange the content according to our stored conceptions. For this reason, the state of having an impression is not determined by the causal history of the impression. Chrysippus' terminological specifications are meant to bolster this distinction: namely the distinction between what an impression is, as a characterization of one of the states of the soul, and the question of how impressions come about. It may eventually, always turn out that individual impressions are triggered by an external, corporeal sense-impressor, which induces alterations in our soul.⁴¹ But distinguishing that causal history from the impression itself, as it is, enables the Stoics to distinguish between what the impression is of, from the trigger, which might be only very indirectly connected to what the impression is of: e.g. the sight of words on a page might be the sense-impressors, which trigger the impression (say) that polar bears are on the verge of extinction.

The *hupo-epi* pair address something about what the impression is of and how it got there, and not the more or less direct causal history, which produced an alteration in our soul. We will therefore find that the conflation, and confusion, lies with the *hupo* relation: for it will turn out that an impression arises through the causal agency of an external sense-impressor, and accordingly it will have arisen *hupo tinos*, by the agency of something, e.g. the colour white. But this much can also be said of irrational impressions. It is also contingent on any particular impression that it is triggered by this or that sense-impressor. But having an impression is not contingent on this or that experience, it is something to do with the proper workings of the mind. Thus being impressed *hupo*, by, something describes something different: namely that a sense-impressor has acted on our mind so as to fill in the content of an impression. This is how we can then compare the impression that (say) this bear (that we see in front of us) is white, to the impression that polar bears are on the verge of extinction: the first is our mind being impressed *hupo*, by, something (say the white bear in the photograph), the latter is our mind being impressed *epi*, in relation to something we have learnt about polar bears and which needn't have anything to do with what we see in front of us.

The Stoics distinguish between three different questions: (i) how an impression is triggered, (ii) the impression itself, a kind of passivity of the soul, (iii) what the impression is of. It is one aspect of (iii) with which the question of the *hupo* and *epi* relations is concerned. Given the confusion the *hupo* relation gives rise to, it is best gauged in comparison with what can be said about the *epi* relation.

⁴¹ See FREDE 1987d p.153f. and following pages here.

4.4.3. The *Epi* Impressions as ‘Contact from a Distance’: Schubert’s Unfinished Melody

The *epi* relation has been rendered in various ways, from a guarded ‘in relation to’,⁴² to a vague (with Malebranchian echoes) ‘at the occasion of’,⁴³ to a perhaps too concrete ‘on the basis of’.⁴⁴ Too concrete, because it suggests an empathically artificial distinction between being impressed ‘by something’ and being impressed ‘on the basis of something’. Andreas Schubert, whose analysis follows this direction, distinguishes between impressions, or thoughts (as he rightly identifies this discussion as pertaining only to rational impressions, i.e. thoughts), which are spontaneous, because they arise from corporeal items, and thoughts which are reconstructed in our minds on the basis of incorporeals (*nachvollziehende Gedanken*). This process of reconstruction is an internal activity by which the mind produces a content, relative to the *lekton*, which was ‘at the basis’ of this operation.

In truth, the process Schubert indicates is not a different process from the one which characterizes the natural operation of our minds in articulating received information into propositional form. He in fact leaves as mysterious as ever what the difference is when the ‘basis’ for this operation is a *lekton*. Appeal to a ‘basis’ does not remove the problem; if anything, it rather implies a corporeal basis to the incorporeal *lekton*. Schubert draws a parallel between the operation of the mind he describes here and how a *lekton* is grasped by those who, being acquainted with the language in which a particular expression is pronounced, are able to recognize it when it gets expressed. For the mind is impressed by the sound, but the content of the impression is determined by what is expressed by the sound, i.e. the *lekton*. Sound here is the ‘basis’ from which the mind then reconstructs the *lekton* which the sound has conveyed. Schubert is relying on an important text concerning *lekta*. It is S.E. again, but in a very different context, that of deciding about what is true or false (M. 8.12). For the Stoics, it is *lekta* which are true or false, and not the words which are used to get *lekta* said. The *lekton*, S.E. reminds us, is that which ‘is revealed’, on hearing certain sounds, to same-language speakers, but which completely passes foreigners by, though they hear the same sounds.⁴⁵

⁴² LONG & SEDLEY 1987 vol.1 27E; ANNAS 1992 p.80.

⁴³ BRUNSCHWIG 1988 p.74.

⁴⁴ SCHUBERT 1994 p.123: ‘auf Grund von’.

⁴⁵ SCHUBERT 1994 pp.122–5. Schubert takes this passage from S.E. M. 8.12 as fundamental for his account of *lekta* as ultimately linguistic items. One of the lines of argumentation throughout his monograph is to show how other passages, in which *lekta* are discussed, such as the one on the gymnastics teacher, are not only compatible with it, but are in fact expansions on it. By not assuming, or anticipatorily seeking, such compatibilism, our investigation in this book diverges greatly from the conclusions found in Schubert. The passage from M. 8.12 is discussed at length in 8.1.3 below to conclude, in contrast to Schubert, that it is a passage about ontology and only derivately about language.

The wording of the text is crucial to justify Schubert's bringing these two passages together, but it also illustrates the conflation of two *hupos* that, I argue here, is so misleading. In S.E. 8.12 a *lekton*

is revealed *by* (*hupo*) voice and is that which we have grasped and which subsists in our mind.⁴⁶

Schubert finds in this passage the justification for his explanation for the gymnastics teacher passage, at *M.* 8.409, in which he seeks to minimize the contrast between the *epi* and *hupo* relations: for *lekta* ultimately relate to us, to our minds, through a *hupo* relation after all. It is by means of a corporeal sense-impressor, sound, that the impression whose content is the *lekton* thus communicated comes about. The impression is a reaction of the mind to the sound which reveals a *lekton*. The 'reconstructing' of the content of a thought, which is what Schubert pinpoints as the contribution of the *epi* relation in comparison with the 'spontaneity' of direct sense-impressions, is paralleled to, and understood as, what S.E. means by the hearer's 'grasping back' ('*antilambanesthai*'), the revelatory sound by which our minds grasp the *lekton* corresponding to the sounds uttered.

Schubert is building on a similar line of thought, already developed by Victor Goldschmidt,⁴⁷ who speaks of the *epi* relation, in the example of the gymnastics teacher, as describing a mediation between the impressed soul and the *lekton*, in contrast with the immediate relation between sense-impressors and the soul in the cases of sense-perception. That *lekta* are said to be seized 'at a distance' is understood in terms of an indirect connection between the soul and the thing emitting the relevant sense-impressors. Thus the *epi* relation is shown to be based on perception after all, since the soul in these cases is affected through a '*contacte à distance des impressions sensibles*': an oxymoronic solution of a 'contact at a distance', by which Goldschmidt ties the notion of the incorporeal *lekton* down to a basically sensualist conception of Stoic philosophy. Ultimately, Schubert and Goldschmidt give accounts in which the *epi* relation is not considered as a real, distinct relation, but a necessary oddity to cover how some sense-impressors communicate not themselves but *lekta*, which they have the capacity to transmit. The *epi* relation thus ends up being nothing more than an *hupo* relation once removed.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ S.E. *M.* 8.12: 'τὸ ὑπ' αὐτῆς [i.e. φωνῆς] δηλούμενον καὶ οὐ ἡμεῖς μὲν ἀντιλαμβανόμεθα τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ παρνηρισταμένῳ διανοίᾳ'.

⁴⁷ GOLDSCHMIDT 1977 p.163 and n.7.

⁴⁸ SCHUBERT 1994 p.123 goes as far as suggesting that what the gymnastics pupil is taught are 'perceptual thoughts' (*noēseis aisthētikai*), foisting onto thoughts (i.e. rational impressions) a further subdivision, analogous to that between perceptual impressions and non-perceptual impressions from D.L. 7.51, as if the combination of thought and perception were the specificity of rational beings, since all impressions have their origin in perception. But this is not a Stoic view. It might at best fit a Plotinian view (*Enn.* 3.8.8.14–16) whereby life and thought (*noēsis*) converge to set out different kinds of ways of life, according to different ways of thinking:

One question arises from this analysis, namely why should not all impressions be derived from an *epi* relation though they have a basis in a perceptual impressor? For, as Schubert says, all impressions are thoughts, which therefore have an articulated content: thus the colour white generates in a rational mind the impression that this is white, just as the sounds ‘*il y a un contacte à distance*’, for a French speaker, are grasped to form the impression that there is a contact at a distance. The answer is that both Schubert and Goldschmidt are describing what we have designated as the causal history of impressions, which in most paradigmatic cases can be traced back to a perceptual trigger. That they should fall back on this explanation as a way to tidy up the problematic *epi* relation is symptomatic of the conflation of the *hupo* relation in which the causal history (i.e. what triggers the impression) is identified as the content of the impression. Putting side by side two passages that do not actually address the same question makes such a conflation all the more tempting.

For there is a difference between the mind’s being impressed by the sound of uttered speech, and the impression having a content which corresponds to what is expressed by the uttered sound. The point of introducing the *epi* relation is to understand how we can receive impressions with a content corresponding to things we have, precisely, not perceived. The *epi* relation does not serve to analyse how we grasp the meaning of articulate sound. It would therefore be preferable to keep the two passages apart: the one (S.E. M. 8.12) concerns the question of the ontology of truth, i.e. what thing in the world is true, and how this is the thing which we communicate in language, the other (S.E. M. 8.406–10) concerns the characterization of the contents of our impressions.

4.4.4. The *Epi* Impression: Paying Attention to *Lekta*

What the *epi* and *hupo* relations are in fact identifying are two ways to account for the content of our rational impressions. In both cases the content is propositional in form and corresponds to a *lekton*. That is what it is to have an impression. But in one case, the *hupo* relation, the propositional articulation is internal to the impression: the kind in which our mind rationalizes over received sense-data. This comes down to attributing a stored concept to a sense-impressor: e.g. that this thing we see on the table is white (where white is a now activated previously stored concept). In the other case, the *epi* relation, no pre-registered or stored concepts need be appealed to in order to rationalize over received data. For there is no received data. The propositional content of the impression is the product of no internal process other than

vegetative thought belongs to the life of plants and perceptual thought (*aisthētikē noēsis*) to the life of beings endowed with sense-perception.

that of the mind's grasping a *lekton* as it has been communicated. What capacity of the mind has been put into operation? Not the same as that by which the sight of white has instigated the articulation productive of the content that this thing is white, but one of attention to a given state of reality, of what reality is like through its having been expressed by a removed non-contiguous source (e.g. a teacher): for example that white reflects all wavelengths of visible light, or that the way to do a somersault is by placing your body in this or that way as demonstrated.

This is why the teaching framework in which this distinction is set out is important, at least as a first stage: for the authority of the teacher guarantees that the *lekton*, which has been expressed, is true, i.e. is the case in reality. The example of the gymnastics teacher is all the more compelling here because what the body expresses cannot not be the case: for in demonstrating a movement, the teacher is demonstrating precisely that movement and not any other. The movement demonstrated is what there is to be taught, bypassing the ambiguities of spoken language. In this light, being taught through being impressed *epi*, in relation, to a *lekton* is a surer guarantee of having an impression of something which is the case than with the *hupo* relation, whereby it is up to us, relying on the conceptions we have so far accumulated, to order the data received. There is a far greater chance of error there than with *epi* impressions.

The Stoics configure the meeting of the incorporeal *lekton* with the impressed mind in such a way that the *lekton* does not trigger the impression, but is constitutive of the mental process itself, in that the grasping of it, being attentive to it, constitutes the content of impression. The contrast between the *hupo* and *epi* relations is between an impression whose content is a rationalization over sense-data (*hupo*), and an impression (*epi*), whose rational articulation mirrors one already set out in reality, which does not involve our own conceptions. The latter is properly speaking what teaching consists in.

The distinction between the *hupo* and the *epi* relations thus enriches our understanding of the distinction made in the *Placita* passage (900B) between impressions of sense-data, by which we come to have the experience (*empeiria*) of what the colour white is, and the impressions of things, which can only be taught through *didaskalia* and *epimeleia*, teaching and careful attention. This doublet is characterized through the contrast with the reception of sense-impressions. The Greek term '*epimeleia*' bolsters what the Stoics intend by 'teaching' ('*didaskalia*'): namely that the *epi* relation is best rendered as to pay attention to *lekta*. Being impressed *epi* is to have paid attention to a *lekton*. When the mind pays that sort of attention, an impression is formed in accordance with the *lekton* communicated.

It is the subsistence, i.e. the ontological independent status, of the *lekton*—independent from its being thought—which makes it possible for it to be the object of this kind of attention. The *epi* relation therefore eminently

characterizes the rationality of our minds as capable of grasping the *lekta*, which are the states-of-affairs outside our minds and constitutive of reality. What is more, the *epi* relation is the relation which guarantees that we can make progress. Teaching and careful attention are the fundamental stages of the development of our rationality. This implies that teaching is the ordinary, normal, human, and necessary path for rational development. What there is to be taught is what reality is constituted of, and it is *lekta* which hold together that structure. This is why teaching, *didaskalia*, is not anything to do with transmission of doctrine or theological initiations as discussed in 1.1 above, but rather an ordinary exercise of our minds.

Teaching must also be distinguished here from ordinary communication, which is, in part, the purport of the passage Schubert brings in from S.E. *M.* 8.12, on the *lekton* as what is communicated, which same-language speakers grasp and foreigners do not. But that communication is an exchange of *lekta* is surely derivative on the status and role of *lekta* as part of the structure of reality, and therefore not only independent of any individual speaker but also, first and foremost, what there is to learn and what there is to teach. That this comes about through speech, or through gestures, or through paintings or algorithms, or any other organized grammar of expression that is corporeal and capable of expressing a *lekton*, is secondary to setting out the kind of relation our minds have with *lekta*. It is furthermore contingent on someone's expressing a *lekton* that such communication comes about. But the ordinary, human, and necessary stage of *didaskalia*, which we are identifying here—necessary because it is what frames the natural development of our reason—is not contingent on there being someone to express this or that *lekton*. The gymnastics teacher, modelling the correct movement from a distance, draws the attention of his pupil to the particular *lekton* which is there to be grasped first by the teacher's expressing it, and then by the pupil's understanding it and thereby having an impression whose content is this *lekton*. As such, this is a perfect example of what teaching is—the language of gestures substituting itself to spoken language, being, perhaps, more precise in this because unerring. The pupil eventually stops being a pupil officially, as indeed each one of us does in that we no longer have teachers at some point in our lives, but we continue to develop our capacity to grasp *lekta*, having learnt to be attentive to them:

incorporeals do not act in any way, nor do they produce impressions on us, but it is we ourselves who are impressed in relation to them⁴⁹

This is what we do all our lives, long after we leave school and our teachers behind, we pay attention to the *lekta*, however partial or flawed that attention

⁴⁹ S.E. *M.* 8.406: 'τὰ ἀσώματα οὐ ποιεῖ τι οὐδὲ φαντασιῶ ἡμᾶς, ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν οἱ ἐπ' ἐκεῖνους φαντασιούμενοι.'

is. That is what it is to be rational. Though we will never be more than foolish (save for the wise, who, however, are as rare as the phoenix, as Alexander reminds us at *Fat.* 199.18), we are rational fools. For we have developed into the kind of beings who have access to *lekta*. The prevalent and perhaps most familiar mode of access to *lekta* is through speech. It is therefore time for us to turn to the role of language in a world structured by *lekta*, in which *lekta*, perforce, are all there is to say.

Lekta

All There Is to Say

5.1. LEKTA AND LANGUAGE: DISTINCTIONS

We have so far seen that *lekta* are a kind of *sēmainomenon*, a thing signified (2.2.2 above). We have put forward a number of arguments for the mind-independence of *lekta* (3.2, 3.3, 4.3, 4.4.3 above), and bolstered thereby the claim that *lekta* are constitutive of the structure of reality (1.3.6, 3.3, 4.2 above).

To claim that *lekta* are constitutive of reality is to make a claim about the fundamental contribution *lekta* make to the ontological framework. The claim is thus also about the Stoic account of reality, which *lekta* constitute. *Lekta* are constituents of the world, but they are also our access to it through language, for they are what gets said when we speak and the contents of our thoughts, for they correspond to the contents of our impressions. Reality is thus constituted, at least in part, of items which have as a characteristic that they can get said and thought by us. Accordingly, what we say and what we think follow an articulation determined by the structure of *lekta*. This is what makes us rational beings. There is, moreover, a certain circularity to the *systema*, for the rationality of the world is grounded on rational beings being able to access it through its structural articulation (the *lekta*), by learning about it, questioning it, ordering it, wishing things from it and so on. All of these are different ways of getting things said, precisely those things which constitute reality, i.e. the *lekta* themselves.

The Stoics rely on a particular understanding of ‘saying’ according to which what there is in the world cannot but be such that it is possible to get it said. This possibility is the guarantee of the rationality of the world, so that *lekta*, what there is to say, are indeed the keystone of this rational *systema*. The line of thought is that there is a deep link between saying and rationality. The term ‘*lekton*’ is derived from the verb ‘*legein*’, ‘to say’. The Stoics give an analysis of what this deep sense of to say consists in. It rests first and foremost on

the distinction between expressions, or signifiers (*sēmainonta*), and what is thereby expressed, that is, what gets said. The verbal adjective '*lekton*', with its modal connotation, deepens that distinction by indicating that it is possible that something can, but also cannot, be said, and yet be there to be said. This severs the tie between expressing and saying, and is at the heart of the deep sense of saying the Stoics rely on, understanding saying, *legein*, as closer to the unfolding of reason-*logos* than to language, which is then considered as derivative on rational structure. This account of *legein*, rooted in a notion of rationality, where speech is an expression of reason, appears in Plato, in the *Sophist*, a few pages after the Gigantomachia discussed in 3.2.1 above, in terms which reaffirm the Stoics' familiarity with this dialogue.

5.1.1. Saying: Lessons from Plato

The Form of Beauty, the man Socrates, a cat, the table, and so on, can all, at best, only be 'named'. What is to name? It is what Plato distinguishes from saying, *legein*, in the *Sophist* (262d2–6), when, towards the end of the dialogue, he gives an account of false statements. For this, Plato first gives an analysis of what a statement is, what he calls a *logos*. For there to be a statement, two fundamental conditions must be fulfilled, the first that there be something the statement is about, the second that something be said about that which the statement is about. Indeed, the solution to the possibility of false statements in the *Sophist* rests on the distinction between these conditions. For it will turn out that the truth or falsehood of a statement consists in whether what is said of what the statement is about is actually true to say of it. The statement will turn out false if what is said, of what the statement is about, is just not true of that thing specifically, e.g., of Theaetetus, that he is flying.¹

Plato identifies two distinct linguistic functions, firstly, that of picking out a thing of which something can be said, which is naming, *onomazein*, secondly, that of actually saying something about something, which is saying, *legein*. Each and every thing which has a name (*onoma*) (a Form or a sensible object, be it animate or not) can be named. Plato is particularly insistent on what role naming plays in the production of a statement, for he accounts for it in two ways, using the 'about X' (*peri*) formula and also the straight genitive for 'the statement is of X': thus for 'Theaetetus sits', the Eleatic Stranger in the dialogue makes a point of asking Theaetetus 'what is the statement about (*peri*), and what is it of (genitive)', to which Theaetetus answers 'that it is clearly about me

¹ Plato *Soph.* 263b11–12, the point being that many things which are, are just different from the things which are about Theaetetus, so that if they are said of him, the statement is false. Yet something is said all the same; it is thus possible to have false statements in which something is said which is false, but these statements are not nothing at all, see M. FREDE 1992, *esp.* pp.412–20.

and of me' (*Soph.* 263a5–6). The two formulae are belaboured throughout the discussion (262e6, e14, 263a5–6, a10–11, b4, c7), so as to suggest there is a distinction there, namely that sometimes a statement can be about X, but not of X. There are a number of considerations to take into account,² but one in particular is that insisting in this way on what naming consists in, makes for a marked difference between naming and saying. For what it is to have a name, and thus to be the sort of thing which is named, is to be that in reference to which there is a statement (whether it is about or of the thing named). But what makes a statement is something rather different. Indeed, in the text there is first and foremost a question about the object of *legein*: we do not say, *legei*, what the statement is about (i.e. what is named), but we say something which then constitutes the statement, the *logos*. Thus what gets said is not what the statement is about, or of, but the result of a different linguistic operation altogether.

On the basis of a grounding distinction between two necessary linguistic components (the name, *onoma*, and the verb, *rhēma*, *Soph.* 262a–b³), the difference Plato sets out is that between a speaker voicing the *onoma*, e.g. 'Theaetetus', by which we refer to or identify a particular object, and what the speaker achieves when combining name with verb to say 'Theaetetus sits'. In the latter case, a third thing has thus 'been produced': namely the statement, the *logos*, which is third after the voicing of the name and of the verb. But when it comes to the *logos*, it is no longer a question of picking out this or that object, but of having successfully singled out, not a thing (Form or particular object), but something we mean to say about something. In addition, the *logos* is true or false.

In the *Sophist* a series of terms expressing the sense of having produced or achieved something ('*apergazesthai*', 'to produce', at 262b7, '*ti perainei*', 'to achieve something', at 262d4) lays the foundations for the function which *legein* (to say) and its derivatives (mainly *logos*) are intended to fulfil. These terms contribute to an understanding of saying along the following lines: namely that meaning is what is produced through a certain combination of distinct items, distinct in their syntactical functions.⁴ Plato does not make room for a distinction between words and that which the words correspond to,

² For instance, that the statement of X (genitive), is unique and singular to that X, such that X has no other statement of it apart from this one (such as unique identity statements), whereas many statements, possibly contradictory and possibly false, can be made about it (*peri*); see FREDE 1992 p.416f.

³ Plato restricts his analysis to the 'shortest and first kind' as an explanation for the identification of two core components, name and verb, which are syntactical categories rather than distinctions of surface grammar. See ADEMOLLO 2015 esp. p.44f. on the purport of the distinction between name and verb, with a survey of the terms of the distinction in the *Cratylus* as a background for the *Sophist*; more on this at 9.1.2 below.

⁴ *Soph.* 262d5–6: 'καὶ δὴ καὶ τῷ πλέγματι τούτῳ τὸ ὄνομα ἐφθελγέσμεθα λόγον', 'and in fact, we gave the name "logos" to this precise combination'.

or rather, that correspondence is taken as a given. For the combination of words (name and verb) is described as reflecting the combination of things that the words, separately, name.⁵

The distinction between words and things, between signifiers and what is signified, is a discovery properly set out by the Stoics. We have already seen some of the implications of the distinction, and more are yet to be examined in the following pages, in particular with regard to how the Stoics understand saying. But the principal concern for Plato is to distinguish between a statement, what it is of, and the possibility, thanks to that distinction, of proving that we legitimately say something of something (and therefore say a true *logos*). In that perspective, the question of isolating what is said from its expression is not as crucial as it will be for the Stoics. Therefore, in the Platonic analysis, when someone says, *legei*, he is expressing that which is produced from the relevant combination. Naming, *onomazein*, is a first step towards saying something. By merely naming, a speaker is not actually producing a statement, but naming specifies the sort of thing about which a statement can be made. The objects of naming and of saying, as what we name and what we say, are thus at different semantic levels. What a speaker names is a single identifiable item, e.g. Theaetetus, or sitting, as a kind of rest. What a speaker says is not a single identifiable item, but something produced out of a combination of identifiable items, though it itself is one thing, a statement, distinct at a semantic level from either of its components. In saying something, a speaker does not ‘merely name’ (*Soph.* 262d3), but says something of something, e.g. that Theaetetus is sitting, about Theaetetus. It is this deeper level of what is captured by ‘saying’ in Plato that gives the Stoics the direction of inquiry which leads them to identify a real, distinct, item which is sayable, the *lekton*.

The Stoics thus pursue a lead, rooted in the Platonic suggestion, about how to understand the deep implications of saying in contrast to naming. But the Stoics operate a radicalization of the lessons learnt from Plato. For the Stoics, the object of saying is, as for Plato, one single item, but it is identifiable not through the combination of its components but for itself, as that which is said when it gets said but need not actually be said to be the real thing it is. It is not

⁵ In the *Sophist*, to say, *legein*, is the result of the combination of at least two kinds of sounds (namely of name and verb) revelatory of something in the world. They are ‘the two kinds available to us for revealing, through the voice, something about being’ (ἔστι γὰρ ἡμῖν που τῶν τῇ φωνῇ περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν δηλωμάτων διττὸν γένος’ *Soph.* 261e4–6). Speech is the joining together of the spoken signs standing for the items in reality, of which they are the indicators. This much hangs on the ‘just as’ (*kathaper*) at *Soph.* 262d8–e2: ‘Οὕτω δὲ καθάπερ τὰ πράγματα τὰ μὲν ἀλλήλοις ἡρμωττεν, τὰ δ’ οὐ, καὶ περὶ τὰ τῆς φωνῆς αὐτῶν σημεῖα τὰ μὲν οὐχ ἀρμόττει, τὰ δὲ ἀρμόττοντα αὐτῶν λόγον ἀπηργάσατο’, ‘in this way, just as some things fit together, and some do not, thus it is also with the signs of the voice, some do not fit together, but those which do, produce a statement’. See on this correspondence DENYER 1991 p.162.

dependent on expressions, or on surface grammar. We shall see that surface grammar is derivative on the structure of a *lekton*. A *lekton* therefore does not subdivide into parts, but will be complete or incomplete. This constitutes a radical shift of point of view from the Platonic account. In order to arrive at a notion of a *lekton* as a single item which is the object of saying, the Stoics fine-tune the sense of ‘to say’ by distinguishing between uttering and saying. Saying, in the strict sense, will turn out to be exclusively of *lekta*, such that the proper sense of ‘*legein*’ is removed from speech, though coincidentally, at times, associated with it.

5.1.2. The Modal Nuance of the Verbal Adjective ‘*Lekton*’

The Greek word ‘*lekton*’ corresponds to the form of the verbal adjective ending in *-tos* derived from the verb *legein*. The term we are using, in the wake of the Stoics, is the substantivized form of the neuter ‘to *lekton*’, designating a thing which is sayable. Verbal adjectives with the *-tos* suffix can be interpreted in various ways. They can express a passivity (e.g. ‘the things wished for (*ta eukta*) by the Trojans’, as in Homer *Iliad* 14.98), but more characteristically the passivity is tinged with a nuance of possibility (in contrast with verbal adjectives ending in *-teos*, which express obligation⁶). Thus ‘*thnētos*’ means ‘that can die’, i.e. ‘mortal’ and not ‘dead’. In addition, the form in *-tos* is sometimes used in an active sense, often in parallel with the passive usage: thus ‘*dunatos*’ signifies sometimes ‘capable’ as in ‘we are capable (*dunatoi*), i.e. have capacities, by nature’ (Arist. *EN* 2.4, 1106a9) and sometimes ‘which can be done’, or ‘possible’ as in the common expression ‘*kata ton dunaton*’ (as much as possible).⁷ Certain misinterpretations of the Stoic notion of the *lekton* consist in taking the verbal adjective in the active sense. The Stoics are then taken to identify *lekta* with expressions as items which say or can say: ‘*lekta* are expressions (*phōnai*)’, we read for instance in Themistius.⁸ The works in which this understanding of *lekta* is presented are late texts from the fourth century AD onwards. Their authors have assimilated one side of a debate which, at an earlier stage, constituted a strong point of criticism against the Stoics, namely that there is no difference between what is said and what is

⁶ As in ‘to what extent must wisdom be practised (*askēteon*)’, in Plato *Gorg.* 487c5.

⁷ See CHANTRAINE 1979 §244 p.306.

⁸ Themistius in *An.Pr.* 92.3: ‘τὰς δὲ φωνὰς λεκτά’ as mentioned earlier, see 4.3 with n.26 above. Themistius presents a comparison of Stoic and Peripatetic terminology: what the Peripatetics call ‘*phōnai*’ the Stoics are said to call ‘*lekta*’. The same comparative grid is referred to subsequently in Philoponus in *An. Pr.* 243.4, and in Ps-Ammonius in *An. Pr.* 68.6, and echoed in a passage in Ps-Alexander I (presumably Michael of Ephesus) in *S.E.* 20.28–9; see EBBESEN 1990 pp.446–8 on Philoponus as a source for Michael of Ephesus. For more on the Peripatetic comparisons see 6.3.3 below.

uttered, between what the Stoics call a *lekton* and the words which they claim get the *lekton* said. The very word '*lekton*' is, according to this line of criticism, redundant. It is probable that the assimilation of *lekta* to words, which is the general understanding amongst the later commentators, originates with the people S.E. calls the 'Grammarians'. S.E. reports that the Grammarians talk of *lekta* as linguistic items which cover linguistic changes from one dialect to another. For the Grammarians, *lekta* belong to the sphere of signifiers, to how one says things idiomatically in this or that dialect. S.E. explicitly underlines the contrast with the Stoics: 'the topic of *lekta* does not, unlike with the Stoics, concern what is signified (*to sēmainomenon*), but rather the signifier (*to sēmainon*)' (S.E. *M.* 1. 78).⁹ That S.E. frames the contrast in terms of signifiers and things signified is a clear recalling of the Stoic distinctions. S.E. is thus not merely name-dropping the Stoics, as other people who use the term '*lekton*', but rather indicates that the appropriation by the Grammarians of this element of Stoic terminology is done on the back of a misunderstanding of the original distinction between signifier and thing signified.

The Stoic use of the word '*lekton*' relies fully on the nuances which the morphology allows for, namely the passivity and the modality inherent in the form of the verbal adjective. The Stoics thus posit an item which is different from expressions, first and foremost because *lekta* are that which can be said, which is, to all intents and purposes, very different from that which says.

When a *lekton* actually gets said, then it is what is said:

the things which are said are actually *lekta*¹⁰

The *lekton* is neither superfluous nor a mere linguistic idiosyncrasy. As we see in this passage from D.L., it is the passive nuance of the verbal adjectival form that fundamentally characterizes the way the Stoics understand the *lekton*: a *lekton* is what is said (with the passive form '*legetai*'). But the distinction between signifier and signified, which, as we shall see in the next section, maps onto a distinction between uttering and saying, makes it possible to consider what is said as utterly distinct from what is uttered. What is said is therefore there to be said, regardless of, and indeed independently from, being uttered. A speaker may eventually get a certain *lekton* said by means of a certain utterance, but the Stoic claim is that there is, in some way, a *lekton* there to be said whether a speaker expresses it or not. There is therefore no condition that

⁹ Cf. BARNES in *CHHP* p.197 n.139 on the Grammarians. S.E.'s report is confirmed when we find in Apollonius Dyscolus, *Synt.* 43.15–16, for example, an appropriation of the Stoic distinctions between different kinds of *katēgorēmata* (which are incomplete *lekta*) considered not as items which are signified, but as linguistic items, the different conjugated forms of the verb. Apollonius quotes the Stoics as calling the infinitive form of the verb, 'verb' ('*rhēma*'), but conjugated forms, '*katēgorēmata*'. The Stoics do no such thing, rather they say that a *rhēma* signifies a detached *katēgorēma* (D.L. 7.58), more on this at 8.2.2.1 below.

¹⁰ D.L. 7.57: 'λέγεται δὲ τὰ πράγματα, ἃ δὴ καὶ λεκτὰ τυγχάνει'.

a *lekton* be necessarily sayable. For a *lekton* is not always, nor necessarily, expressed. There is, precisely for that reason, a vast number of *lekta* which might never get expressed, but they are there to be said, regardless. That is their status. They subsist as the *lekta* that they subsist as, before, whilst, and after they are expressed, if they ever are.

The modal aspect of the verbal adjective is a crucial characteristic of a *lekton*, for it captures a feature of Stoic ontology, namely that the *lekton* is what can be said but need not be said to subsist as the *lekton* it subsists as. In the ‘can’ of ‘can be said’, there is both the indication of an ontological status of *lekta* as an item which is there to be said, independently of ever being expressed, as well as the characteristic of the *lekton* as being the kind of thing capable of being said, if and when the appropriate expression is formulated. *Lekta* thus have an articulation which makes them capable of being expressed. But this, in turn, implies that meaningful expression is meaningful precisely because it is modelled on the articulation inherent in the *lekton*. For the *lekton* is, in the deep sense of saying that we are exploring here, all there is to say.

To be there to be said describes the specific ontological status of *lekta*, in a parallel way to the specifications describing the other incorporeal subsistents, e.g. the void, described as ‘that which is there to be occupied by bodies though itself is not so occupied’ (D.L. 7.140). Thus, though *lekta* are characterized by being the kind of item which can be said, they are not linguistic items since they subsist in the way they do without ever being expressed.

Criticism of the Stoic notion of *lekta* is grounded on the refusal, for various reasons, to accept *lekta* as having any kind of ontological status of their own, considering them rather as dependent on bodies. Indeed, one readily available critique is to question the action—passion neutrality, which is meant to characterize incorporeals. For having the capacity to be expressed, or having the capacity to be occupied by a body, would appear to be capacities for passivity, which is, as we have seen, a mark of corporeality (cf. 3.1.3 above). This is, at heart, what the distinction between being impressed *epi* (‘in relation to’) *lekta*, rather than *hupo* (‘by’) *lekta*, discussed in 4.4 above, is concerned with. With the doctrine behind the *epi*-relation, the Stoics manifest awareness that it could look as though incorporeal *lekta* had causal agency. The schema set out by the *epi*-relation is meant to deflect such conclusions.

The modality, on account of which *lekta* are possible contents of speech, or on account of which place (*topos*) is possibly occupied by a body but is not, describes the relation bodies have with incorporeals. It does not alter the incorporeal, and is not a criterion for incorporeality as acting or being acted upon is a criterion for corporeality. In this way, the incorporeals are not dependent on being expressed, or on being occupied by a body, to subsist as the incorporeals they subsist as. For this reason, talking about the incorporeals as there to be expressed, or thought, or of place as there to be occupied by a

body, dispels the ambiguity which arises in talking of them as capable of being expressed (or sayable, as the common translation goes), or as capable of being occupied by body. For the modality present in these latter cases rather spells out the relation of the incorporeals to bodies—and, specifically, which body relates to which incorporeal (being there to be expressed by speakers, for *lekta*, there to be occupied by a body, for place)—rather than setting out a crucial aspect of their ontological status. Thus the modality which grounds the morphology of the term ‘*lekton*’ must be fully understood: a *lekton* can be said, but can also not be said, and yet there are such things as *lekta* in the world, which are there to be said. It is time to deepen our grasp of the Stoic understanding of saying on the basis of the distinction between saying and uttering.

5.1.3. Saying and Uttering

The Stoics make a distinction between to utter and to say on the basis of a distinction between the objects of saying and uttering:

to say is different from to utter, for it is sounds which are uttered, but things which are said, and which actually are *lekta*¹¹

D.L.’s account of Stoic dialectic is, in the main, re-worked versions of handbooks, or compendia, of Stoic dialectic.¹² It is difficult, therefore, to assess how precisely the phrasing should be taken, both on account of the varying degree of precision of D.L.’s sources, and as a result of D.L.’s own contributions in organizing the presentation of the material. And yet, perhaps even because of this, when it comes to the transmission of core elements of doctrine there is a bare essentialism in D.L.’s text, which sets out fundamental distinctions with authority. This passage belongs to the part of book 7 which has been recognized as deriving, not from the broad-sweeping synopsis attributed by D.L. to Diocles, but from a more pedagogical source, a post-Chrysippean standardized introduction to dialectic.¹³ The paragraph our passage is extracted from, in line with this source-characterization, presents some essential distinctions

¹¹ D.L. 7.57: ‘*προφέρονται μὲν γὰρ αἱ φωναί, λέγεται δὲ τὰ πράγματα, ἃ δὲ καὶ λεκτὰ τυγχάνει*’.

¹² See HAHM 1992 for a detailed description of D.L.’s method of composition.

¹³ Diocles used to be considered as the source for the whole detailed account from D.L. 7.49–82, with varying degrees of conviction, by Nietzsche, von Arnim, Pohlenz, Egli, as recounted by MANSFELD 1986 p.329 with further bibliographical references. It is Mansfeld, however, who, in a now generally accepted reading of the structure of this part of D.L. book 7, reduces the Diocles passage to the account of impressions and perception (from 7.49–53). In his wake: SCHENKEVELD 1990 p.92 and HAHM 1992 p.4147ff. Part of the force of Mansfeld’s conclusions (p.368ff.) lies in his showing how topics which Chrysippus clearly deals with, but on which he does not appear to have written specific works, become subsequently standard, with specific works having been written on these topics by post-Chrysippean Stoics (e.g. Archedemus and

in a dry, didactic form. A series of distinctions are thus set out: between sound (*phōnē*) and articulate sound (*lexis*), and between articulate sound (*lexis*) and signifying speech (*logos aei sēmantikos*), speech is ‘always’ signifying whereas *lexis*, though articulate, includes also senseless (*asēmos*) sound, and thus sometimes does not signify at all.¹⁴ A last distinction is set out between, not different kinds of sounds, but different kinds of actions, concerned with the production of sounds: saying (*legein*) and uttering (*prophēresthai*).¹⁵ But the terms of the distinction show that this is not quite right: only uttering is the action concerned with producing sounds, whilst saying is an action which is concerned with ‘things’, ‘*pragmata*’, which turn out to be *lekta*. Thus, whilst uttering covers the production of all the kinds of sounds previously distinguished (*phōnē*, *lexis*, and *logos*-speech), a different kind of item altogether, different from the sounds which are uttered, is associated with saying. Saying is thus a rather different action from uttering, in virtue of the difference in their objects (i.e. as what it is one utters distinguished from what it is one says), and not on the basis of their subjects (i.e. who utters and who says).

It is clear from the wording that the emphasis on the object is key. The distinction is thus first set out between ‘*legein*’ in the active form and ‘*prophēresthai*’, used here in the middle rather than passive form.¹⁶ But when the explanation for the distinction is given, it is not the active forms of these verbs, as they have been presented, which are used. Rather the same verbs appear in passive constructions. Reverting thus to a passive formulation enables the objects of uttering and saying to become the grammatical subjects of the passive forms of ‘to be uttered’ and ‘to be said’: respectively the sounds (*hai phōnai*) are the subject of ‘*prophērontai*’ (are uttered) and the things (*ta pragmata*) are the subject of *legetai* (are said). In this way, an emphasis is given to the objects of the actions, placed as grammatical subjects, whilst the actual subjects of the actions (who utters, who says, the speakers) are not

Antipater): this is the case, for instance, for the topic concerning voice (*phōnē*) on which Archdemus, but also Diogenes of Babylon, write (cf. D.L. 7.55 and 7.57).

¹⁴ A senseless articulate sound, e.g. the famously unexplained ‘*aleppe*’ in the first line of Canto VII in Dante’s *Inferno*: ‘*Pape Satàn, pape Satàn, aleppe*’; see LINDORFER 2010. The stock example in antiquity is the one we find in D.L. 7.57: ‘*blituri*’, as used also by S.E. M. 8.133 in distinguishing between signifying and non-signifying voice, and subsequently in all similar contexts, e.g. Ammonius in *Int.* 17.22, and see *Simpl. in Cat.* 124.17–19 on *blituri*’s not signifying, even if put together with other sounds.

¹⁵ At this early stage of our analysis, we shall speak of saying and uttering as ‘actions’ in a broad unspecific way, akin to the way Socrates speaks, for instance in Plato’s *Cratylus* 387c9–10, affirming that ‘saying (*legein*) is a kind of action (*praxis tis*)’.

¹⁶ It is in the middle form that the verb is indeed commonly used in the sense of ‘to utter’: e.g. at S.E. M. 7.44: ‘*γραμματικός σολοικισμού τιθεὶς ὑπόδειγμα σολοικισμόν <μὲν> προφέρεται, οὐ σολοικίζει*’, ‘a grammarian who is giving an example of a solecism, utters a solecism, but he is not thereby making a solecism’.

mentioned. The grammatical re-adjustments culminate with the final relative clause, in which the true nature of the object of saying is revealed to be *lekta*.

Many precautions are taken to introduce *lekta* as the objects of saying. First, there is the use of ‘*tunchanein*’, which has a more emphatic force compared with just ‘*einai*’, as ‘manifestly is’ compared to just ‘is’, when it comes to indicating an identification, as here between *pragmata* and *lekta*.¹⁷ But the emphatic intention is explicit, with further corroboration from the adverbial sequence ‘*dē kai*’ (‘and actually’). The presence of either ‘*kai*’ or ‘*dē*’ on their own, especially in a relative clause, would sufficiently emphasize that attention is to be drawn to a special relation of the subordinate clause with the antecedent: ‘*kai*’ in such cases has a distinctly explanative role and ‘*dē*’ tends to indicate that something is really the case.¹⁸ Thus the insertion of both *dē* and *kai* with their explanative contributions testifies both to the specificity of the notion of the *lekton*, and to the caution required in introducing this most peculiar and difficult of Stoic notions.

5.1.3.1. *Speakers and Parrots*

Distinguishing saying and uttering on the basis of their objects reveals, by omission, an ambiguity concerning the subjects of saying and uttering, which are side-lined for the sake of emphasis on the objects. For there is a sense in which to say and to utter are, in effect, not distinguishable. It is the sense on which most of everyday human, rational communication is based, by which what we say is what we utter. It is in this sense that S.E. gives a definition of ‘to say’, *legein*, as a kind of uttering: ‘saying is the uttering of signifying sound’.¹⁹

¹⁷ On the emphatic use of ‘*tunchanein*’, with or without the participle ‘*ὄν*’, see KÜHNER-GERTH II.2 §483 p.67. EGLI 1967 p.12 puts the use of ‘*tunchanein*’ down to a characteristic of Hellenistic style as an equivalent to ‘*einai*’. Other such recognizable stylistic indicators are, e.g., ‘*γινώσκεται*’ at D.L. 7.49, instead of the doubled prefix ‘*γινώσκειται*’. But from parallel passages in D.L. it appears that *tunchanein* is used to draw attention to a further element in a general description: thus a few paragraphs down from our passage, at D.L. 7.62, ‘*tunchanein*’ is used to tie together two different definitions of dialectic: first that of Posidonius, beginning ‘*διαλεκτική δέ ἐστιν . . . κτλ.*’, then that of Chrysippus, beginning ‘*τυγχάνει δ’ αὕτη . . . κτλ.*’. The use of ‘*tunchanein*’ for the second definition is basically equivalent to the ‘*esti*’ of the first definition, but with an added nuance, that of extending the range of identification of the definiendum. In any case, the use of ‘*tunchanein*’ here does not warrant any association with the substantivized form ‘*to tunchanon*’, which we find in contexts discussing the details of the Stoic theory of language (e.g. S.E. M. 8.11–13 or Stob. *Ecl.* 1.12.3.10–11; cf. 8.1.3 below), *pace* BARNOUW 2004 p.290, who offers an interpretation by which it is assumed that *pragmata* are ‘facts’ (*sic*) and *lekta* ‘refer, linguistically, to these facts’. Such a reading is too far from the text, both with regard to arbitrary inferences about *pragmata* as facts, and with regard to the introductory spirit of the passage. There is little doubt that ‘*tunchanein*’ cannot but have its common non-technical sense of ‘being’ or ‘manifestly being’.

¹⁸ See DENNISTON 1950 on ‘*δή*’.

¹⁹ S.E. M. 8.80: ‘*λέγειν γάρ ἐστι, καθὼς αὐτοὶ φασιν οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς, τὸ τὴν τοῦ νοουμένου πράγματος σημαντικὴν προσφέρεσθαι φωνήν*’, ‘to say, according to the very same Stoics, is to utter

But that saying and uttering are not identical, but merely coincide sometimes, is what the Stoics bring out through the distinction drawn on the basis of their objects. The distinction is the grounding for identifying what makes speech rational. For only in the case of rational communication do uttering and saying—sometimes, but not in the case of actors, for instance²⁰—coincide. For the Stoics, only rational beings can communicate their rational thoughts through language:

thought is capable of expression, enunciating in propositional form (*logōi*) that which has been received by the impression²¹

Thought, that is, *dianoia*, is ‘*ekklētikē*’: this indicates the capacity to utter (by the possessor of thought) that which is contained within the thought, i.e. the content (which is in a propositional form). In discussing this passage in 2.2.4 above we focused principally on the broader context, namely on the stages by which a rational impression is formed, and on the further workings of the mind, which the articulated content of the impression initiates (namely assent, and the cognitive states it yields: knowledge, opinion, or the intermediary *katalepsis*). The stages, as we saw, go from the reception of sense-data to the absorption into propositional form of the sense-data received, to a fully fledged thought, which constitutes the rational impression and in accordance with which ‘there subsists a *lekton*’ (D.L. 7.63). It is thus a different and separate capacity of *dianoia* that it can also eventually, if needs be, utter its content, with ‘*ekklalein*’.

There is a net separation between what *dianoia* can eventually do, namely enable a speaker to utter what he or she has in mind, and what it is to have a thought, which is the mind forming an articulation in correspondence with a *lekton*. In this light, S.E.’s definition of *legein* as an uttering of a voice, signifying a thought (quoted above from *M.* 8.80), strengthens the understanding of what saying means for the Stoics. It is a capacity rooted to the rational structure of the world. For a thought is a thought insofar as it is an articulation in relation to a *lekton*, which makes up that structure. But this is so precisely because saying is understood as distinct, and different, from uttering, and from speech. S.E., in an attack on the distinction, takes the identification of saying with uttering as so binding for the Stoics that they have no grounds to distinguish one from the other, and therefore cannot actually distinguish

signifying voice, which is of a thing thought’. Thus LLOYD 1971 p.60f. speaks of ‘meaningful utterances’.

²⁰ This is the point made by Chrysippus in *Log. Inv.* PHerc. 307, col.9, 13–16: ‘thus with actors: they signify the things (*ta pragmata*) but they neither swear, nor command, nor pray, nor ask, nor learn from something’, in MARRONE 1997 p.92, see more on this question at 6.2.4 below.

²¹ D.L. 7.49: ‘ἡ διάνοια ἐκκλητική ὑπάρχουσα, ὃ πάσχει ὑπὸ τῆς φαντασίας, τοῦτο ἐκφέρει λόγῳ’. On the second clause see 2.2.4 above.

between rational speech and nonsense. But in so doing, S.E. reveals the Stoics' intent, precisely that of isolating the workings of rational speech.

The distinction between saying and uttering is tested, by S.E., against the difference between a parrot producing a sequence of sounds which sound like, for example, 'What time is it?', and a person uttering the words 'What time is it?'.²² S.E. claims that on the Stoic notion of rational speech as a kind of utterance there is no difference: uttering is saying, saying is uttering. It is enough that the sounds seem to be articulate and significant in order to consider the utterance to be rational speech, since the utterance of significant sounds is what characterizes rationality. Parrots thus ('absurdly') will have their share of rationality (S.E. *M.* 7.275). By not distinguishing between uttering and saying, S.E. twists the Stoic view into a claim about the form of an utterance. For indeed as far as uttering alone is concerned, it is only the kind of sound uttered which counts, namely the appropriate sound to express this or that word. But the parrot is not actually saying anything when he utters the sounds he utters. It is merely 'as if he were saying something'.²³ The Stoics precisely distinguish between saying and uttering in such a way that mere utterance alone, without actually getting something said by means of the utterance, is not rational speech. Through the words a person utters, he or she is also thereby saying something, namely asking what time it is, whilst the parrot achieves nothing other than the uttering of sounds. Rational speech corresponds thus to the case in which a speaker is uttering certain sounds and, coincidentally, saying something. Only a rational being can make that coincidence happen.

The comparison of uttering with saying covers in effect three different distinctions: (i) firstly, the distinction between a broad sense of 'to utter' which covers all production of sounds, articulate and inarticulate, and the stricter sense of 'to utter' which is the sense in which it coincides with 'to say', concerned with the production of significant articulate sound; (ii) secondly, the distinction between a broad sense of 'to say' which coincides with the strict sense of 'to utter', and a strict sense of 'to say' which is distinct from 'to utter',

²² S.E. *M.* 7.274–5 and 8.275–6; in the latter passage the discussion of the imitation of articulated speech by crows and parrots is extended to the 'Dogmatists' in general, but it would seem, with the corroboration of parallel passages, that this is a particularly Stoic context of discussion.

²³ It is Varro *LL* VI.56 who reports that Chrysippus says of parrots, as of infants, that they do not speak but 'quasi-speak' ('negat loqui, sed ut loqui'). This is a characteristic way of speaking for the Stoics, who, for instance, and as we have already seen (3.2.4 above), speak of concepts (*ennoēmata*), which are mental constructs and completely dependent on our minds, as 'quasi-somethings' (*hōsanei tina*, D.L. 7.61), as if they were real things when in fact they are not, or of the dog at the crossroads, of whom Chrysippus says it is 'as if' he reasons when actually he does not (S.E. *PH* 1.69; see 2.2.4.1 above). The strategy consists in acknowledging a superficial resemblance, as with uttering and saying, all the better to set out the mistake of conflating two such things.

not the production of significant sounds but of what significant sounds are significant of; (iii) thirdly, the distinction between the strict sense of 'to utter' which is concerned with the production of 'significant sounds' (*phōnai sēmantikai*) and the strict sense of 'to say' which is an action distinct from the production of sounds, concerned with *lekta*. The first and second distinctions are crucial steps in order to reach the third, which closes up on the proper, relevant sense of '*legein*' as the action concerned with *lekta*. The last distinction describes two different kinds of actions: on the one hand, uttering produces corporeal items, the *phōnai*, which, following the Stoic definition, is the air affected in a certain way, having 'been struck' (*peplēgmenos*): '*phōnē* is the air struck by an impulse' (D.L. 7.55). The speaker is the cause of this striking of the air, as it is he who has struck the air in this manner.²⁴ On the other hand, in saying, whereby what gets said are *lekta*, the speaker is not the cause of *lekta*. Indeed, saying, in a strict sense, does not bring about or produce anything in the sense in which uttering does.

It is Plato in the *Sophist* who speaks of saying in terms of 'producing something' or 'achieving something' (with the '*ti perainei*' formula at *Soph.* 262d4). Thus, with the Stoics, the formula takes on a literal or even a corporeal basis. For it is in the narrow sense of 'uttering', which coincides with the broad sense of 'saying', that 'something is achieved', namely the uttering of a certain (corporeal) expression, which thereby gets something said. But when it comes to the strict sense of 'to say', which is distinct from uttering, then saying is rid of the connotations of production of relevant sound. In distinguishing a strict sense of 'to say', distinct from uttering, 'achieving something' has been turned by the Stoics into the activity of a speaker producing significant sounds (*phōnai*) so as to get a *lekton* said. The *lekton* itself, however, is distinct from that activity. The Stoics thus deepen the Platonic analysis of how it is that something is achieved through speech, by separating the question of sound production (and correct grammatical combination of nouns with conjugated verbs) from that of there being something there to be said in the first place. For if there is the possibility of communication, it must be of something, the *lekton*, which is not dependent on being produced or caused to come about. In this way *lekta* are not dependent on speakers for their existence—indeed, they do not exist, as the *phōnai* exist; nor are they brought into existence, for they are not bodies.

This Stoic explanation of the production of meaningful speech would thus seem to come at the price of accommodating and defending a new category of thing, the incorporeal *lekton*, and providing an account for it. We have already seen that this has constituted the angle of attack of many of the critics of the Stoics, old and new. But we have already begun to see that the answer from the

²⁴ D.L. 7.56; Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 902F–903A: sound, *phōnē*, is said to act, *poiei*, in that it moves from the speaker to the hearer.

Stoics is that this is a misrepresentation. The Stoics do not accommodate or extrapolate *lekta* to supplement a question about a philosophy of language, but rather start off with a view of reality which is constituted by *lekta*. The subsequent role of *lekta* in the production of meaningful speech is, to all intents and purposes, an implication of the establishment of an ontological structure founded on the presence of *lekta*. If speakers want to say something, *lekta* are what there is to say.

The deep understanding of ‘to say’, which the Stoics bring out, is thus developed around the notion of a *lekton*, and with reference to speakers. Speakers are thereby guaranteed the possibility of meaningful speech. For it is in virtue of *lekta* subsisting in the way they do, independently of a speaker ever getting them said, that they are the kind of things which can be said. To say and to utter are thus, crucially, distinct because what we utter is not what is said. For we utter a series of sounds, but what is said is one incorporeal thing. It is not therefore the surface grammar, as we called it, of utterances which determines what is said, but what is said which determines the grammar. In order to get said what there is to say, it follows that there is a strict requirement for what a correct utterance is, one which satisfactorily gets a *lekton* said.

5.1.3.2. *What is Uttered*

Not any significant sound we utter gets something said, but only ‘uttering’ in the strict sense, which coincides with ‘to say’. The sense, that is, by which in uttering the appropriate sounds we ‘achieve something’, to use the Platonic formula. In the *Sophist* Plato highlighted the need for the right combination or ‘joining together’ of words so as to produce a statement, a *logos*: the string of ‘runs roars cries’ is not a *logos*, nor is ‘Theaetetus cat mouse’ (262b5–10). There is thus a correct combination, and there is an incorrect combination.²⁵ On the Stoic account, uttering is a question of uttering appropriately arranged sounds. The difference with the Platonic model is that the association of sounds, of the *phōnai*, does not reflect an association of what each individual *phōnē* refers to or signifies. Rather, a correct association makes it possible to express one *lekton*. Thus, when we talk about an utterance, what is generally involved is more than one word. It is a string of words, strung together according to precise rules, which gets something said. As, for instance, the first line of Homer’s *Iliad*: ‘Sing, Goddess, the wrath of Achilles’: this is one signifying sound in the relevant sense of ‘signifying’, as significant of what is said, or what there is to say. S.E., who focuses on this example at *M.* 8.80, proceeds to show that the Stoic claim cannot be sustained, for the reason that

²⁵ In these lines of Plato’s dialogue, Theaetetus receives this information as astounding and genuinely never heard of before (exclaiming repeatedly: ‘How so?’, ‘I didn’t know that’, ‘What do you mean?’ at 261e3, 262a2, a12, b4, etc.), which shows how novel Plato’s approach is.

each word, which composes the sentence is uttered one at a time: in uttering one word, the next is not yet uttered, and the preceding already uttered, so that, not being able to be uttered all at once, not being able to ‘*sunuparchein*’, be present together, nothing can be said through them.²⁶

S.E. shows that saying, as the Stoics understand it, is incompatible with uttering, because we do not actually say anything by uttering sounds. Therefore, S.E. concludes, there are no such things as *lekta*, since to be said, a *lekton* must be uttered. S.E. appeals to an argument from the absurd: any utterance is constituted by a string of sequential sounds which, necessarily, can only come about and disappear one after the other—such are the limitations of being a body (as sound is). Pursuing his line of argument, speech would never be more than the uttering of one single phoneme. However, the refutation is not aimed at defending an absurd position, but rather at bringing out an absurdity in the Stoic position, which associates a single incorporeal entity, a *lekton*, with a string of corporeal words: thus saying one thing by means of many words.

S.E., however, does not do justice to the Stoic position, and he repeatedly betrays his own bias. By treating uttering and saying as if they were identical, and showing that the upshot is absurd and paralysing as far as any production of meaningful speech is concerned, he thereby demonstrates that there is something wrong with his identity assumption. S.E. loosely fluctuates between different levels of ontological categories. Thus he blurs the distinctions which terminology upholds: speaking of uttered words, which are corporeal *phōnai*, S.E. speaks of them as obtaining, *huparchei*, whereas it is *lekta* and incorporeals in general which obtain, *huparchei*.²⁷ Thus S.E. continuously moves from claiming that parts of (corporeal) sounds do not *huparchei* or *sunuparchei* to concluding, therefore, that the *lekton* which these *phōnai* are meant to express cannot *huparchei*, obtain, either. At *M.* 8.81, of the first line of the *Iliad*, S.E. says:

But it is not possible to utter the sound which is significant of this, because that whose parts do not obtain together, does not itself obtain.²⁸

When we utter the first half of the verse, the second is not yet in existence, but even when we utter the first word, the second word is not yet in existence. It is not, moreover, because S.E. is merely speaking loosely, or that he is not aware of the technical and precise use of ‘obtaining’ in these contexts, that he seemingly makes such oversights. For it is clear that S.E. has precisely this technical terminology in mind in relation to *lekta*, and that he is, in effect,

²⁶ See a parallel passage in S.E. *PH* 2.109.

²⁷ As we have already seen (see 3.1 with n.4 above), ‘*huparchein*’ (‘to obtain’) is, along with ‘*huphistanai*’ (‘to subsist’), one of two verbs used to characterize the ontological status of incorporeals, which precisely do not exist as bodies do.

²⁸ S.E. *M.* 8.81: ‘ἀλλὰ τούτου γε τὴν σημαντικὴν φωνὴν ἀμήχανόν ἐστι προφέρεισθαι διὰ τὸ οὐ τὰ μέρη μὴ συνυπάρχει, μηδὲ αὐτὸ ἐκείνο ὑπάρχειν’.

mocking the Stoics' efforts to make a distinction between the way *lekta* are described (in terms of obtaining) and the way the utterances, meant to express *lekta*, are described (as corporeal items). He subsequently takes the case of a proposition, an *axiōma*, as constituting a similar case to the line from the *Iliad*. He concludes that, given that an *axiōma* too is a composite, 'a proposition, therefore, never obtains (*huparchei*) as a whole'.²⁹ The use of '*huparchei*' here is not easily put down to an indifferent, common use, which would be simply interchangeable with '*einai*'. Being associated in particular with *lekta* in a discussion of the status of *lekta*, S.E. is referring to the particular ontological status of incorporeals, characterized by '*huparchein*'. The critique is therefore made in full awareness of the Stoic position: a *lekton* cannot obtain if the parts of the utterance which expresses it come in and out of existence.

But the utterance is corporeal. Different rules govern its existence from the way *lekta* can be said to obtain. The utterance, in proceeding from a speaker to an interlocutor, acts: 'the voice acts (*poiei*)' (D.L. 7.56). As such, the utterance behaves much like our colour example from the *Placita*, as the basic mode by which we receive sense-impressions: through hearing, sense-data impress themselves on our mind.³⁰ This is not how *lekta* obtain. We have already seen that they cannot themselves be involved in any causal role when it comes to the formation of impressions. Therefore, the question of one word being uttered at a time cannot be the appropriate angle to take in questioning the possibility of there being such things as *lekta*. For the very notion of *lekton* breaks with the one-to-one correlation between the existence of a word and the obtaining or subsisting of a *lekton*. The question should rather address, at a first stage, what constitutes a 'signifying sound', that is, what 'uttering' is in the narrow sense by which it coincides with saying. The answer is to be found in a further analysis of that part of dialectic concerned with signifiers, the branch concerned with *sēmainonta*. As we noted earlier (cf. 2.2.1 above), the division of dialectic into signifiers and things signified indicates that there are distinct questions which pertain to one or the other of the branches. Thus, in order to be the appropriate signifying sound, to signify a *lekton*, there are certain features which characterize the utterance. These features are features characteristic of voice as a corporeal thing. They do not characterize the *lekton*, though they are at the service of revealing the *lekton*.³¹

²⁹ S.E. M. 8.83: 'οὐδέποτε ἄρα ὅλον ὑπάρχει τὸ ἀξιώμα, ἀλλὰ μέρη τοῦ ὅλου· τὰ δὲ μέρη τούτου οὐκ ἔστιν ἀξιώματα', 'therefore, an *axiōma* can never obtain as a whole, but only parts of the whole; only that the parts of it are not *axiōmata*'.

³⁰ See 4.4 with n.34 above on the five senses. We have now seen touch, with the gymnastics teacher moving his student's body; sight and hearing are equally set out as sense-impressors which trigger sense-impressions in us.

³¹ This neat distinction in roles and features between the utterance and the *lekton* is what S.E. and in his wake all interpreters who stick to a linguistic interpretation of *lekta* (see most recently ALESSANDRELLI 2013 p.46) refuse to make. But if *lekta*, as this line of thought takes it, are

5.1.3.3. Peri Phōnēs, On Voice: a Question of Dialectic, not Rhetoric

The *phōnai* cover the range of kinds of words: proper names, nouns, verbs, articles, conjunctions, which make up the list of the parts of speech drawn by the Stoics (D.L. 7.57–8). The first three, names, nouns, and verbs, are distinguished by the different kinds of things each ‘signifies’ (*semainon*) or ‘reveals’ (*deloun*): names and nouns signify qualities, an individual quality for name (e.g. Socrates) and a common quality for a noun (e.g. lion), and a verb (*rhēma*) signifies an ‘uncombined *katēgorēma*’. There are thus signifiers which signify bodies (qualities) or incorporeals (*katēgorēmata*). The last two kinds of words, articles and conjunctions, are characterized as items standing in a certain relation to the other words: conjunctions conjoin (*sundoun*) the parts of speech, and articles discriminate (*diorizon*) between them in terms of kinds and numbers. Each of these words, or signifying *phōnai*, is or can be uttered, but it is not the uttering of one kind of *phōnē* alone which gets something said. The single words have a role as contributing to a sentence’s signifying something. What is thereby signified is what the arrangement of words, *qua* arranged words, expresses, not what, taken individually, the different words involved signify.

The arrangement of the words follows rules which set out how words must be strung together in order to express something.³² These are the ‘virtues’, or excellences, which pertain to the topic of the parts of speech: of these, the first, as far as the Greek language is concerned, is ‘*hellēnismos*’, correct Greek, which concerns the rules governing the proper construction of a sentence:

an expression which is correct according to all the rules of the art, without any colloquialism³³

The reference to ‘the rules of the art’ seemingly contrasts with the other virtues, which are clarity, conciseness, appropriateness, and correct usage

dependent on utterance, then either there is no way of distinguishing meaningful speech from nonsense, as in the parrot case, or there must be a further quality inherent in specific *phōnai* which makes them signifiers—but this is, in effect, where Plato leaves matters in the *Sophist*, whereby certain signifiers combine to say something. The Stoics are precisely attempting to give an answer as to how this actually can be, by analysing the laws of syntax rather than the features of words.

³² The topic concerning signifiers, *semainonta*, is often also designated as ‘the topic concerned with words’ (e.g. ‘τῆς φωνῆς τόπος’ at D.L. 7.43). See Ax 1986 p.158 n.90 on the tendency this latter designation has to replace the original Chrysippean talk of signifiers, e.g. at D.L. 7.62. Ax suggests that this marks a shift of emphasis in this branch of dialectic: the study of words as linguistic items, rather than words as semantic, signifying items, indicating a move towards a separate science of grammar. The tendency can also be noted through the post-Chrysippean recognition of the topic of ‘*phōnē*’ as deserving of a separate study, as the books entitled ‘*Peri phōnēs*’ by Archdemus and Diogenes of Babylon attest (see in this regard, the remarks by MANSFELD 1986 mentioned in 5.1.3 with n.13 above).

³³ D.L. 7.59: ‘Ἑλληνισμός μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ φράσις ἀδιάπτωτος ἐν τῇ τεχνικῇ καὶ μὴ εἰκαῖα συνηθεία’.

(listed at D.L. 7.59). These all concern already properly formed sentences. Thus, in comparison, correct Greek comes down to the mechanics of a basic grammar; the correct ordering and fitting together of words to form a sentence.³⁴ Therefore, beyond the Greek language specifically, there will be a virtue of speech, in general, which deals with the basic grammar of a language (we find the corresponding '*Latine*' for Cicero in *De Orat.* 3.37). Like the ethical virtues, all the virtues involve one another.³⁵ Thus the other virtues of speech have correct Greek as a basic condition.³⁶ Though they are not 'technical' virtues like correct Greek, there is a certain measure of technicality in their descriptions, insofar as they are rules designed to establish how a correctly formed sentence can express precisely what there is to be said. This is referred to as the 'thing' ('*pragma*') which is what there is to be said and which an utterance expresses, or reveals. Accordingly, the descriptions of each of the virtues of speech are directed towards the purpose that the virtues serve, namely always one and the same: getting the thing there is to say (the '*pragma*') actually said. Thus the virtue of conciseness 'serves to reveal the thing' ('*pros dêlōsin tou pragmatos*'), appropriateness is 'appropriate to the thing' ('*oikeia tōi pragmati*'), clarity is that which is 'recognizably presenting the thing thought' ('*gnōrimōs paristōsa to nooumenon*').³⁷

All but one of these virtues (conciseness) are already discussed by Aristotle and Theophrastus,³⁸ but there is a shift in the way the virtues are considered

³⁴ Indeed, '*technikon*', which we are translating by 'the rules of the art' is what becomes in the discipline of grammar, one of the three grounding parts of grammar, along with 'historical' and the 'specialized' (*idiaiteron*), the latter dealing with the elements of speech and their association, see S.E. M. 1.191ff. See also FREDE 1987b pp.310–12 and SCHENKEVELD 1990 p.106, in which correct Greek (p.96) consists in the rules for the 'prosaic use of language', i.e. correct ordinary language, as opposed to slang, or colloquialism.

³⁵ D.L. 7.125 on virtues: 'the possessor of one, is the possessor of all'.

³⁶ Cf. S.E. M. 1.194: *hellēnismos* is the basis for clarity (*saphēneia*) and pleasantness of expression (*prosēneia*). See also Arist. *Rhet.* 3.5, 1407a19–20 on *hellēnismos* as the principle of speech.

³⁷ See SCHENKEVELD 1990 p.100 on these virtues as excellences of dialectic and not rhetoric. He analyses the case of conciseness, reading S.E. M. 2.6–7, in which the Stoics, in agreement with Xenocrates, contrast the conciseness proper to dialectic with the length and breadth of rhetoric, adding Zeno's example of the clenched fist illustrating the compactness of dialectic in contrast to the extended fingers illustrating rhetoric (see 2.1.2 with n.14 above). It should be noted, however, that in the way Schenkeveld presents the virtue of conciseness, it would seem as though conciseness itself is a question of style. However, as shown above, the definition does not concern style, but is properly a question of dialectic, concerned with expressing what is there to be said. On the distinction between style and correct expression, see FREDE 1987b p.318. On the virtues as distinct from rhetoric, and forming a complement to the presentation of the parts of speech, see AX 1986 pp.161–2, noting also that it is a later tradition which assimilates these virtues to the study of rhetoric under a Peripatetic influence; see also on this tradition SCHENKEVELD 1990 p.102f.

³⁸ Clarity and appropriateness are mentioned by Aristotle at *Rhet.* 3.2, 1404b1–5, as also *hellēnismos*. Theophrastus has a particular interest in rhetoric, which leads to his elaboration of the four virtues of speech (*virtutes dicendi*) which Cicero evokes at *De Orat.* 1.79 and 3.37. Simplicius in *Cat.* 10.23–11.1 mentions Theophrastus in particular as having written about the

once they are taken up by the Stoics. The Aristotelian and subsequent Peripatetic tradition treats the virtues of speech as rules for style, subjected to the requirements of the kind of 'job' ('*to heautou ergon*', Arist. *Rhet.* 3.2, 1404b3), the sentence, or web of sentences, is supposed to carry out. Thus clarity, for example, necessary for any speech, is actually a relative notion, depending on the circumstances in which a speech is made and on appropriateness with respect to the audience, and much less with respect to what in fact there is to be communicated.³⁹ The latter is secondary, on the Peripatetic view, to what the virtues of speech are concerned with, namely the question of how to make something clear to such and such an audience: this is what properly belongs to rhetoric.

For the Stoics, the point of view shifts: the virtues of speech are concerned with the proper way to get what there is to be said, namely a *lekton*, actually said.⁴⁰ The rules therefore, do not pertain to rhetoric, which concerns the means of complying with certain forms or styles (e.g. to the panegyric style, to judicial oratory, and so on, see D.L. 7.42). Rather, the rules set out the stages which, starting from basic grammar, lead to the production of the precise utterances capable of revealing *lekta*. As Epictetus recalls (quoted in 2.1.1 above), the study of the parts of speech is the natural path to follow in order to acquire right reason. Thus, for the Stoics, the virtues of speech, which govern the relations between the parts of speech, are at the service of dialectic, that is, the mapping out of the ontological structure of reality. There is a place in the Stoic philosophical account for rhetoric, and thus for the art of adjusting speech to an audience, but this is not the role assigned to the virtues of speech. Accordingly, the vices of speech, barbarisms and solecisms, are described, not as errors of style, but as failing to get something actually said. They are described as the misuse of a word within a sentence, for barbarisms, and a wrong or disjointed ordering of the words ('*akatallēlōs*') in a sentence, for solecisms.⁴¹

The opposite of the virtues of speech consist expressly in the wrong assembling of words, producing ill-formed strings of words, unfit to express what there is to say. The virtues thus appear as fundamental rules of language production, rather than excellences attainable by specialists or particularly gifted orators. The vices primarily contrast with the first and grounding virtue of *hellēnismos*. However, given that *hellēnismos* is the requisite for the other virtues, and that the other virtues themselves are concerned with the

parts of speech ('*Περὶ τῶν τοῦ λόγου στοιχείων*') and being interested in *lexeis* for the sake of *lexeis*, words for the sake of words, which is 'a different subject matter' from *lexeis* as significant ('*ἄλλας ἔχουσι πραγματείας*'). See FREDE 1987b pp.309–10; CALBOLI 2007 p.137.

³⁹ See further INNES 1985 p.255ff. on 'audience-oriented' rules of speech.

⁴⁰ See BARATIN & DESBORDES 1981 p.30 on the shift with respect to the Aristotelian approach.

⁴¹ See also S.E. *M.* 1.210 with similar definitions.

arrangement and order of words in a sentence, the two vices D.L. mentions properly contrast with all of the five virtues listed.⁴² The use of the adverb ‘*akatallēlōs*’ (‘disjoined’) which expresses the incongruity of the words in relation to one another, underlines, by contrast, the requisite for correct speech: namely the correct assembling of the right sequence of words, with a view to expressing one thing. For indeed the sequence of words on one side is counterbalanced on the other by the singleness of the item they all serve to express, which is designated alternately as ‘the thing’ (‘*to pragma*’) or ‘the thing thought’ (‘*to nooumenon*’).

5.1.3.4. *Can We Always Say What We Think?*

The ‘thing’, as we have seen D.L. emphasize in the preceding paragraph, is ‘actually the *lekton*’. In those lines (D.L. 7.57, see 5.1.3 n.11 above) in which saying and uttering are distinguished because ‘what we utter are *phōnai*, but what we say are the *pragmata*, which are actually *lekta*’, some commentators see a distinction between two kinds of *pragmata*: one kind which can be spoken (Wolfram Ax’s ‘*sprachfähig*’), the *lekton*, or sayable kind, and the other kind which cannot be spoken.⁴³ The translation, which needs to be supplemented for this reading, relies on taking the definite article in front of ‘*pragmata*’ as a demonstrative: ‘we say those *pragmata* which actually are *lekta*’. Note, however, that there is no demonstrative article in the Greek (we would need a ‘*tauta*’ in front of the ‘*ta*’ of ‘*ta pragmata*’). The text does not thus readily supply the grounds for this line of interpretation.⁴⁴ The kind of *pragma* which is never spoken is associated with the content of a thought, taken separately from its ‘incorporation within a signifying expression’; the

⁴² True enough, from the way the vices are introduced in at D.L. 7.59 with the partitive formula ‘ἐκ τῶν κακιῶν’, it would seem that the two vices mentioned are but examples from a longer list, as claimed by SCHENKEVELD in the chapter on ‘Rhetoric’ in *CHHP* p.219 n.243, quoting Ps-Herodian *De Solec.* 308.14–17, who gives a list of six virtues of speech, followed by their corresponding six vices. However—apart from the improbability of a specifically Stoic source to Ps-Herodian’s list—in the following lines of this passage from *De Solec.* until the end of the treatise a few pages down (ending at p.312.5), it is only solecisms and barbarisms which actually are discussed: the difference between them, and especially different kinds of barbarisms. The additional four vices Ps-Herodian lists are sub-kinds of the main two. What this passage can, at best, be taken to show, is that D.L. reports the main vices of speech, and that the other kinds of vices can each be traced down to one or the other of the main headings, barbarism and solecism. For this reason, in the overview in D.L., the other sub-kinds are superfluous to mention, and D.L. is actually complete as far as main categories are concerned.

⁴³ Ax 1986 p.201 n.264. And see ATHERTON 1993 pp.252–4, noting that *pragmata* and *lekta* are ‘identical in most cases’, thereby implying that there is a distinction.

⁴⁴ For the Greek see n.11 above. The solution is to put the onus of discriminating between kinds of *pragmata* on the ‘*tunchanei*’, reading: ‘what we say are the *pragmata*, that is to say, those which happen to be *lekta*’. See 5.1.3 n.17 above on the grounds for not making much more of ‘*tunchanein*’ here than an ordinary use, which is a slightly more emphatic ‘*einai*’. The interpretation of ‘*tunchanein*’ is in any case not decisive, and the following discussion does not rely on it.

lekton is the same content of the thought, but considered as a ‘virtual content of speech’.⁴⁵ On this account, some *pragmata* are not *lekta* (because they are only thought of, and never uttered); and *lekta* come to be present only when there is actual speech. When we speak our thoughts, what we say are *lekta*, but if we do not voice our thoughts, the contents of our thoughts are not *lekta*, but just content, which the notion of a *pragma* is meant to capture. The *lekton*, as a thing signified by a signifying expression, constitutes thus a third stage of the speech process, once the content of thought is actually brought about through speech: ‘once it is incorporated in significant speech’. The insistence, in this line of interpretation, on the ‘incorporation’ involved with speech is a way of underlining that it is the corporeal existence of the utterances that brings the *lekta* into existence.

Two objections can be made. Firstly, this interpretation does not take into account the distinction between saying and uttering, on which, however, the whole paragraph in D.L. is based. Instead, the distinction offered is one between uttered-said *pragmata* (which are *lekta*), and *pragmata* which are neither uttered nor said. A *lekton* is considered here as what is said when one utters something. The *lekton* would thus characterize the signifying specificity of significant expressions. This is by and large what the interpreters of *lekta* as linguistic items concur with. But they rely also on the passage from S.E. (*M.* 8.80) discussed above (5.1.3.1 with n.19), in which *legein* is taken to be nothing other than a kind of uttering. According to S.E.’s strictly language-dependent view as it is defended in this passage, there is no other kind of *pragma* that could go unexpressed and still be something signified. All there is to meaningful speech, is speech which expresses things—these things signified (the *sēmainomena*), are that which D.L. tells us the Stoics call ‘*lekta*’.⁴⁶ But the view put forward by Ax and others is a view that makes place for something meaningful, which is additional and distinct from speech. It is therefore a view that acknowledges the limitations of a purely linguistic interpretation of meaning for the Stoics. But, rather than re-consider the notion of a *lekton* as independent from ever being expressed, this line of interpretation prefers to insert additional items to the *lekta* (purely linguistic), namely a person’s thought, considered as mute *pragmata* which are independent from speech. The redundancy is glaring, but it is also illuminating.

The *pragma*, which is not a *lekton* (because not expressed) is supposed to correspond to the stage in which a *lekton* is not yet expressed, or might never be expressed. If it does get expressed, the *pragma* transforms into a *lekton*. This is odd. What is more, there are no texts, from any of our sources, which suggest as much. And it is not without some over-stretching that we can extract this picture from the small relative clause in D.L. 7.57, ‘which are

⁴⁵ With Ax 1986 see also BARATIN & DESBORDES 1981 p.31.

⁴⁶ See ALESSANDRELLI 2013 p.102.

actually *lekta*'. There is thus no textual backing, but neither is there any ontological backing, for what status would these mute *pragmata* have, which are fully formed in the mind and become what is expressed when someone speaks? The more simple and straightforward interpretation of the relative clause, according to which the things which are said are more precisely called *lekta*, seems a much more attractive and satisfying reading. Moreover, the modal connotation at the very root of the notion of a *lekton* caters for the concern about the *pragma* which is not expressed: that is what *lekta* are, the things which can be said, regardless of whether or not they are actually expressed.

The second objection concerns what is thought. A thought, on this reading, cannot in itself be anything expressed, and is therefore to be utterly severed from a relation to *lekta*, given that *lekta* come into the picture only when speech is involved. This is the non-*lekton* kind of *pragma*. But all our texts about rationality in human beings are clear at least about one thing, namely that there is a fundamental relation between a *lekton* and a thought. However varied the interpretations of this relation may be (whether *lekta* are considered as products of the mind, or thought is considered as always set out in linguistic terms, or, as the view put forward here, that rational impressions are rational in virtue of their correspondence with the external, ontologically constitutive *lekta*), the involvement of *lekta* in thought is uncontroversial. Indeed, in the paragraph reporting the virtues of speech discussed in 5.1.3.3 above, the virtues are all put at the service of getting what needs to be said, said. What needs to be said, as we saw, is referred to as 'the thing (*pragma*)' or 'the thing thought (*to noumenon*)'. Far from corroborating the account of a *pragma*, which is thought but not articulated such as to constitute a *lekton*, this terminology emphasizes that the *pragma*, or the thing thought (i.e. the content of the thought, and not the thought (impression) itself)—is the *lekton*, which the virtues of speech help to express.

Does it follow that the Stoics think thought is fundamentally linguistic? That is to say, that we do not, or indeed cannot, think without setting out in speech what we think, and that we cannot think if we do not know how to speak. The answer must be: the question is incorrectly posed, for it is the other way around. Language is an expression of rationality. We need not assume priority of language over thought, but reason shapes the articulation of our thoughts, just as it shapes what we have to say.

Ax considers it crucial to reserve a pre-linguistic yet utterly rational stage for thought. But once it is clear that the Stoics identify, not saying with uttering, but saying with reason, this precaution is unnecessary and misleading rather than helpful. That language moulds itself to the *lekton*, in parallel to the way thought does, is a logical consequence of the rational structure of the world, held together by the *lekta*. What speech has to communicate is, in effect, what there is to say, *lekta*, but that is also what there is to think, because

thinking is grasping the articulations of the logical structure. It is clear by now that ‘saying’ for the Stoics has a logical and ontological grounding rather than a linguistic one. It corresponds to what was referred to earlier as the deep understanding of saying, on which the notion of a *lekton* is founded. Thus what is thought and what is said are not different kinds of things, just because one is expressed out loud and the other is a mute content. If I am thinking that the table is round, and I utter the words by which I may convey that the table is round (namely by uttering the sentence ‘the table is round’), it is one and the same *lekton*, there to be said, which is thought and which is uttered.

The contents of our thoughts are the sort of things that can be said because they correspond to *lekta*. That they can also be expressed in words is a subsequent feature, which has less to do with the thought itself than with the nature of language, which, when it is fully mastered by a user (i.e. when all the virtues of speech are correctly implemented), is capable of expressing a *lekton*. We can think without speaking or knowing any language. But at the same time, the same capacity by which we think, is the capacity by which we speak and communicate in any language available to us—the capacity to grasp *lekta*.

When we think, that is to say, at the very least, when we rationalize over sense-data (e.g. over white, namely that this thing that we see is white), we also are capable of expressing the content of that thought through language. Thought and language are capacities we have to mould our relation to the world in terms of articulations characteristic of *lekta*. This is not by chance. The rationality of the world determines this, namely that there should be beings in it with such capacities. But the distinction between thinking and uttering, though both are of *lekta*, enables the Stoics to explain differences in languages. Thus, an utterance is a sound only speakers of a common language may recognize: ‘foreigners do not understand it though they hear the sounds’ (S.E. *M.* 8.12). But the *lekton* which thereby gets said is distinct from the sounds; it is grasped by our minds and can be expressed in different languages. This opens the possibility for translation.⁴⁷ It also indicates, as with the gymnastics teacher, that language need not be restricted to speech alone. A language may be of gestures (the most universal and shared, according to John Bulwer, see 4.4 with n.35 above). For one and the same *lekton* is communicated in virtue of our capacity to access the structure of rationality, systematically structured in terms of *lekta*. The proviso is that we are acquainted with the relevant virtues of speech of the language in use, by which any utterance (or gesture) successfully expresses a *lekton*, *hellēnismos* for Greek,

⁴⁷ See 8.1.3.5.1 below on some qualms about the possibility of translation, given the Stoics’ commitment to particularities in grammatical sequences as revelatory of different *lekta*.

and the equivalents for other languages which, for Bulwer's 1644 *Chirologia*, consists in a mastery of the grammar of hand gestures.⁴⁸

5.2. A *LEKTON* IS ONE, AND THE WORDS ARE MANY

In distinguishing between uttering and saying, the Stoics distinguish between corporeal sounds which are the object of uttering, and the incorporeal *lekton* which is the object of saying. The ontological distinction is thus also parsed in terms of quantity, more than one sound on the one hand, and a single thing on the other. For a *lekton* is one single thing. As we have seen, part of the critique of the Stoic view focuses on this quantitative discrepancy. The question shares concerns with what has come to be known, in twentieth-century debates, as the problem of the unity of the proposition. By analysing the components of a proposition we jeopardize its unity, but how can we avoid doing so?⁴⁹ The question as it is born, or reborn, in the early twentieth century, is grounded in the question of language and meaning. The components of the proposition are directly represented by corresponding expressions.⁵⁰ Thus, even as Gottlob Frege and Bertrand Russell acknowledge a distinction between speech and what is meant by a sentence, the analysis turns on what language means.⁵¹ I do not wish to dwell here, on the (re)discovery by these philosophers of this

⁴⁸ The Stoics themselves incorporate hand gestures into their account of language, witness two distinct considerations: (i) the Stoics contrast two ways of answering questions, which are determinate enough so as to constitute two different kinds of complete *lekta*, the first 'by sign', 'συμβολικῶς', for yes and no kinds of questions (a kind of *lekton*), the second by speech, 'for you must speak' ('δεῖ εἰπεῖν') for the investigative kind of question (D.L. 7.66); (ii) the Stoics mark out a kind of proposition as a 'definite *axiōma*' which contains a definite pronoun, a *deixis*, e.g. 'This one is walking', which is only ever true when there is a specific person we can point to with our finger (S.E. *M.* 8.97 and 8.100; Alex. *in An. Pr.* 177.28–9; *Σ*Dion. Th. 518–19). The hand gesture plays a decisive role not only in assessing the truth conditions of the *axiōma*, but its very presence in reality; if the finger points at nothing, the *axiōma* is destroyed (for more on the *deixis* see 9.2.6 below).

⁴⁹ This is S.E.'s point about the *axiōma* having parts, see 5.1.3.2 with n.29 above. The question about the unity of the proposition is set out by FREGE 1892 and articulated by RUSSELL 1903 §54.

⁵⁰ Thus, for Frege, concept-words point to concepts and object-words name objects. Hence the obstacles encountered with ordinary language, in which expressions are not sufficiently restricted to one or other representative role, see RUSSELL 1903 §52, with GASKIN 2008 *esp.* chap.1, setting out the state of the question from the language-based perspective of Frege, Moore, and Russell, that is to say, where the direction of inquiry is—to follow Gaskin's talk of 'levels'—from the linguistic level to the level of meaning (the opposite direction is invalidated from the start, because meaning is not separate from language).

⁵¹ It is not my concern here to go into discussions of what distinctions are at play, e.g. the further distinction between sense and reference, as it is set out by Frege and, for instance, dismissed by Russell; see GASKIN 2008 for an in-depth investigation. The rekindled interest in the Stoics in the twentieth century, with ŁUKASIEWICZ 1934 and MATES 1953, takes its source from the affinities with the Fregean account.

question, but rather to highlight one important demarcating aspect which diametrically opposes the Fregean–Russellian approach from the Stoics. For though both are beset by the question of unity, whereas it is distinctly a problem to resolve for the moderns, it is not so much a problem for the Stoics, as rather an account which is at the constructive heart of their ontology and cosmology.

With the Stoics, the question first and foremost concerns the reality of *lekta*: what it takes, that is, such that reality not only accommodates *lekta*, but is constituted by them. As we shall see in the following chapter, this is precisely the account that the Stoics offer. Like the existence of bodies, a defensible account of *lekta* must fit *lekta* into the constitution of the cosmos. Bodies, starting with the four elements, are the results of the activity of the active principle, whose characteristic is that it is constantly being active.⁵² For *lekta* to be co-constitutive, they too must play a part in this primordial and world-constructing action. And they do. For the Stoics set out an account of action in terms of a causal process, which crucially involves *lekta*: namely, causes are causes of *lekta* for passive bodies.⁵³ For example, fire is the cause that it is warm; it is the cause, that is, of a state-of-affairs (that it is warm), which is precisely what the Stoics discover is a *lekton*. That it is warm is something different from the fire and indeed from the air that is warmed.

In the following chapters we shall go into far greater detail concerning these matters. The focus here is to set out the challenges the doctrine faces. By obtaining as what a cause is of, the *lekton*'s status as a unitary thing is confirmed, insofar as a cause is a cause of one thing. Thus, when S.E. summarizes the Stoic position, he recalls the unitary status of incorporeals by adding the indefinite pronoun: 'a body is a cause of a certain incorporeal thing (*asōmatou tinos*)'.⁵⁴ This has, strictly speaking, nothing to do with language, hence our talk of states-of-affairs is helpful. Causes are causes of states-of-affairs coming to be actual, or being the case, or obtaining. And states-of-affairs are the sort of things which can be said. This is the terminology the Stoics use to speak of the *lekta*, i.e. as subsisting and obtaining, and not as meanings or referents of sentences, or words, or determined by the sequence of utterances a person manages to produce.

Thus the virtues of speech, as we have seen, do not make a sentence correct because the sentence picks out all the supposedly corresponding elements in the *lekton* it is meant to express. That is not the criterion by which correctness is measured. Rather the virtues of speech are described as contributing so as to

⁵² See D.L. 7.134 and 136: the active principle 'is continually acting on matter to make it malleable for him, in order to move on to the next stage of generation', and see 3.1.3 above.

⁵³ S.E. M. 9.211; Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c. This question is the topic of chapter 7 below.

⁵⁴ S.E. M. 9.211: 'σῶμα [. . .] ἀσωμάτου τινὸς αἴτιον γίνεσθαι'. What the cause is of, is set out in the genitive (*asōmatou tinos*) indicating the *lekton*'s belonging to the cause.

best express a *lekton*, which leaves open the possibility to appeal to different competing modes of expression (e.g. from different languages). Thus the wording, order, and arrangement of words (or symbols) used are correct because, in the language employed, this configuration gets the *lekton* actually said. In other words, the Stoics do not assume that the *lekton* has parts, nor, it follows, that the *lekton* has the parts exemplified by the parts of a sentence. It follows that incorrect speech does not produce something like an incorrect *lekton*, or a badly or partially expressed *lekton*, it simply is uttered sounds which do not manage to get a *lekton* said. The vices of speech are manifest by not getting a *lekton* said. A word on its own, or a badly strung set of words, might refer to or signify, at best, a quality or a list of qualities (D.L. 7.58); but a disordered array of words does not give us access to a *lekton*, nor to a part of a *lekton*.

Lekta are not language dependent. That is to say that a *lekton* subsists, or obtains, as it does, regardless of vicious expression, which fails to express it. In other words, language cannot compromise the status and thus the unity of the *lekton*. And yet, embedded within the notion of a *lekton* as the thing which can be said, is precisely the feature which makes the *lekton* actually said when someone utters the correct expression. We do not utter void, time, or space (the other incorporeals), we utter *lekta* because they are the incorporeals suitable to be uttered, when the correct utterance is produced. For that to happen, it must be the case that *lekta* present suitable characteristics such that an utterance is able to express them—in the same way as, say, void must present suitable characteristics for the cosmos to seep into it at the time of the conflagration. For void, those characteristics are for it to subsist ('it has its kind of subsistence (*tina hupostasin*)', as Cleomedes concludes) outside the cosmos and surrounding the cosmos, being limitless and ready to receive the cosmos.⁵⁵ In the same way the *lekta*, whilst sharing the status of the void, as subsisting incorporeals, present characteristics which make them the specific incorporeals they subsist as. What are these characteristics, if not an order and internal articulation, such as we can recognize, reflected in speech, which is how, by uttering sounds, we get *lekta* said? The form of language is shaped to the articulation of the *lekton*. But then, just as a sentence has parts, so should the *lekton* it expresses; and a half-uttered sentence must correspond to half a *lekton*.

It would seem that the unity of the *lekton* is jeopardized after all if it is to have components which enable us to utter sentences. Though it is not the parts of a sentence which determine eventual parts of a *lekton*, it now seems that whatever parts make up a *lekton*, they are reflected by the components of a sentence.

⁵⁵ See D.L. 7.140; Cleomedes *Cael.* 1.1.64–8 and ALGRA 1995 p.315ff. *esp.* p.325f. on the notion of limitless when it comes to the void.

That *lekta* should be utterable, that is to say, that the co-constituents of reality are such that they are ready, and available, to be expressed in language, is a pillar of the Stoic *systema*. For language is a corollary of the structure of the cosmos: language is concerned with expressing that structure. This is why we would be hard pressed to find something akin to a philosophy of language, in Stoicism, as a distinct topic for discussion. For considerations about language rely on questions pertaining to the physical and logical structure.⁵⁶ At the same time, there is a basis for a philosophy of language in Stoicism, as well as the foundations for a separate science of grammar,⁵⁷ because *lekta* are rooted in the ontological account and are also what we say when we speak.

One of the misleading claims about *lekta* is to confine them to a certain role in a theory of language. One of the reasons given for such a claim is that *lekta* are manifestly nothing different from the words used to express them, and are therefore known and indeed determined by one's use of language.⁵⁸ The claim there is that it is through the utterance of a particular string of words, e.g. 'the house is on fire', that we can refer to the *lekton* [the house is on fire], whose form is thus determined by our utterance. It is what Anthony Lloyd calls the 'isomorphism' between what is said and what is uttered,⁵⁹ considering, accordingly, that there is only one string of words which precisely expresses one *lekton*. Thus, 'the house is on fire' and '*la maison brûle*' express two different *lekta* with different internal structures.

Such a conclusion contradicts some fundamental characteristics of *lekta*, namely that *lekta* are distinct from signifiers. The distinction between signifiers and things signified, amongst other things, guarantees the possibility of translation. If the isomorphist interpretation were correct, what is more, taking *lekta* to be dependent on language, and especially, on a given language, one further question comes to mind, which is what the point of *lekta* is in the first place. This is a question which the ancient critics of the Stoics already asked, namely the Aristotelian Commentators, who assimilate *lekta* to *phōnai*, utterances (see 5.1.2 with n.8 above). Their answer is that *lekta* are nothing but *phōnai*. This is not quite the isomorphists' claim, for they grant that *lekta* are distinct from utterances, only that we cannot tell them apart. There is a certain circularity to this answer, as *lekta* are, on this view, the meanings of words, which form meaningful sentences.

⁵⁶ As we saw in 1.3 above, talk of the physical structure, the logical structure, as also of the ethical structure, is not a way of separating parts of doctrine. This rather is a way to describe the very same cosmic, rational structure of reality, by starting out from different grounding concerns—earlier, we called these entry paths to the *systema*. We begin now to see all the better how, as was stated, *lekta* are the keystone to the whole structural architecture.

⁵⁷ On this see ILDEFONSE 1997, p.138ff. and chapters 8 and 9 below.

⁵⁸ E.g. BARATIN & DESBORDES 1981 p.31f.; ISNARDI-PARENTE 2005 p.179.

⁵⁹ Cf. LLOYD 1971 p.65, hence his talk of 'meaningful utterance' at p.60f.

The challenges the Stoics face at this point are, in the main, two: (i) if we access *lekta* through language, then the form of our utterances reveals to us, firstly, that a *lekton* has a complex structure, and secondly, that we can refer to parts of that structure by expressing one or the other part of a sentence. The second challenge (ii) follows from this, namely that the *lekton* is therefore not a unit. For it has parts which correspond to the parts of a sentence. The Stoics meet these two related challenges. They give a defence of the independent status in reality of a *lekton*, which confirms the unity of the *lekton*, distinguishing *lekta* from language (chapter 6), and grounding *lekta* within a foundational analysis of causation (chapter 7). From there, considerations on a notion of incompleteness are developed, by which the Stoics push for the view that only complete *lekta* are, properly speaking, *lekta* (chapter 8). Incompleteness is thus not the same as Fregean unsaturated concepts, but rather framed as a deficiency of language, anchoring the unity of the *lekton* within a defence of Stoic ontology (chapter 9).

On the Reality of *Lekta*

6.1. *LEKTA* AS ADDITIONAL ITEMS IN ONTOLOGY

The Stoics maintain that there is a distinction between expressions and what gets thereby expressed. They maintain, what is more, that it is an ontological distinction. We have already discussed some of the grounds for this view, according to which the status of *lekta* is independent from us and from the words we utter to express them. We have mostly discussed the grounds set out from within the *systema*, that is to say, the distinction, on the one hand, between *lekta*, which are somethings (*tina*), and our mind-produced concepts, which are not-somethings (*outina*), and the distinction between *lekta* and bodies, on the other hand. This double-sided distinction establishes *lekta* as mind-independent items, in contrast to concepts, and therefore real. In contrast to bodies, however, they lack the capacity for agency or passivity and therefore cannot pretend to the kind of status bodies have in reality. They are there, but at the same time, it would seem, they cannot be there. This is the seemingly fragile and liminal status afforded to the incorporeals. The defence of the reality of *lekta* goes together with the defence of an ontological structure capable of sustaining the reality of the incorporeals, alongside that of the agency-endowed bodies.

To chart the terms of their defence, let us examine in detail the Stoic responses to the attacks, which converge on the question of accommodating incorporeals into reality. The attacks focus on the seeming contradiction in the status of the incorporeals: they are there, but cannot be there. The Stoic responses, not always explicit in our texts, but which can be carefully reconstructed on the basis of the critique, enable us to fill in some of the gaps in the Stoic account, the result of the fragmentary state of our texts. Through these antagonistic texts we shall be able better to corroborate some of the claims already put forward here for the independent status of *lekta*.

6.1.1. Additional is not the Same as Separated

The attack from isomorphism, referred to in the preceding chapter, is insidious because it seemingly grants the Stoics a distinction between utterances and *lekta*, whilst, at the same time, denying the distinction any real application. It removes the very grounds for it, as it denies any real categorical distinction. However, for the Stoics, it is not merely that signifiers are distinct from what they signify. Rather, what they signify is a completely different sort of thing from what signifiers are. A different sort of thing, which is counted differently, behaves differently, and relies on utterly different conditions for its presence in the world. S.E. challenges the Stoics claim in the following way:

how then, ask the Sceptics, can there be a something, which is an incorporeal *lekton*, which is separated from the signifying voice?¹

The term ‘separated’ comes as the final characterization of the relation of *lekta* to spoken sounds. S.E. has just given a detailed exposition of the different kinds of *lekta* distinguished by the Stoics, in which the *axiōma* is distinguished from the question, the prayer, and others (see 6.1.2 below). S.E. claims that the distinctions between these different *lekta* come down to questions of expression (verb tense and mode), which proves that *lekta* are, in spite of what the Stoics claim, dependent on language. The quoted line concludes the presentation of the different kinds of *lekta* (in *M.* 8.71–5), which is a very similar presentation of the kinds of *lekta* as the one reported in D.L. 7.66–8. The presentation is therefore almost certainly an authentic piece of Stoic doctrine. Our quoted line, however, is no longer part of that report, but rather the beginning of S.E.’s commentary. It is introduced by an ‘*oukoun*’, the disputatious interrogative, which thus launches the challenge: how then, ask the Sceptics, can there be a something, which is an incorporeal *lekton*, and which is at the same time supposed to be separated from the signifying sound?

We recognize in the first half of the challenge a formulation, familiar from other passages in S.E. in which the status of incorporeals is similarly reappraised: namely the seemingly heavy-handed sequence in Greek, ‘*einai ti lekton asōmaton*’. The heavy-handedness is deliberately rendered in translation with an emphatic ‘a something which is an incorporeal *lekton*’. S.E. repeatedly has recourse to this formulaic pattern, *ti X asōmaton*, when assessing Stoic theories about the status of incorporeals. Sometimes X stands for place, other times for time, here it is filled in by *lekta*. In all cases S.E. puts side by side the two big claims the Stoics make about the items they designate as incorporeal: that they are a something (*ti*), and that as a something, they

¹ S.E. *M.* 8.75: ‘*οὐκοῦν, φασὶν οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς σκέψεως, τὸ εἶναι τι λεκτὸν ἀσώματον, ὃ κεχώρισται τῆς τε σημαίνουσας φωνῆς*’.

are incorporeal.² The condensed formula, ‘an incorporeal something’, both summarizes Stoic doctrine about the status of incorporeals and at the same time implies that there is something deeply wrong with it.

The Stoic doctrine which the formula is meant to summarize is the Stoic view that the four incorporeals (time, space, void, and *lekta*) have an ontologically independent status. They are somethings (*tina*), as discussed at 3.2.4 above. That is to say that *lekta*, along with the three others, are considered by the Stoics as part of reality and constitutive of it, together with stones, plants, and living beings, having the same kind of non-dependent relation to stones and living beings as stones and living beings have with regard to one another. That is to say, that the reality of living beings is independent from the reality of stones—an independence whose only constraint is the sympathetic configuration of the cosmos (which is the way it is because, in part, of the presence in it of living beings and stones). This is why living beings and stones are co-constitutive of the world. But, it follows, the incorporeals, in virtue of their ontological status, are also co-constitutive of the world, just as living beings, stones, and all other corporeal things. The concentrated formula S.E. relies on is a reminder that the Stoics say that incorporeals are a something, even though they are incorporeal. What S.E. also implies is that this is a precarious pairing and ultimately unsustainable. In the different contexts in which a critique is launched on the basis of this formulation, the aim each time is to show that it is incompatible to say of something that it is both a something and an incorporeal. Here, in talking about *lekta*, the challenge is spelt out plainly, in that the implications underlying the usual formula are unfolded with the use of the additional term ‘separated’ (*kechōristai*).

To judge from the extant sources, speaking of separation to characterize the relation of incorporeals to corporeals, let alone of *lekta* to voice, does not seem to be a Stoic way of speaking. On close inspection this does not seem to be a mere lacuna on account of a scarcity of texts. For the Stoics do speak of separation in rather important contexts, but they reserve the notion of separation precisely to describe the relation between two items, belonging to the same ontological category. In fact, it is only because two things are of the same ontological nature that they can be separated. The argument for the corporeality of the soul relies precisely on this account of separation: for the Stoics ‘nothing incorporeal can be separated from the corporeal’, but ‘death is the separation of the soul from the body’, therefore the soul, which at death is separated from the body, must be a body.³ It is the same core argument which

² Discussing place (*topos*): S.E. *PH* 3.134: ‘granting that place is a something, then it is either corporeal or incorporeal’. Discussing the possibility of grasping something incorporeal: S.E. *PH* 3.52: ‘we must inquire whether something incorporeal (*ti asōmaton*) can be grasped’. Discussing time: S.E. *M.* 10.227: ‘for them [the Stoics] it is an incorporeal something (*asōmaton ti*)’.

³ Mentioned in 3.3.3 above. The argument appears in a number of sources. Nemesius *Nat. Hom.* 2.22.3–6, quotes Chrysippus thus: ‘Χρύσιππος δέ φησιν· ὁ θάνατός ἐστι χωρισμὸς ψυχῆς

is at the heart of discussions of the Stoic account of mixture and the Stoic notion of the blending through and through (*krasis di' holou*) of two bodies.

A drop of wine blends through and through with the ocean, but in every drop of the blend, the ocean water and the wine can be separated.⁴ The question of separation thus concerns the question of the interaction of bodies, and specifically the question of conjunction and the contiguity of the active and passive bodies, as discussed in 3.1.3 above. Separation, in short, concerns bodies for the Stoics; bodies which come in and out of contact with one another, in the way that only bodies can. Therefore for the Stoics separation does not—and cannot—refer to the sort of category mix that S.E. here, at *M.* 8.75, is using the notion of separation to describe. For S.E. is explaining that what the Stoics mean by saying of *lekta* that they are ‘an incorporeal something’, is that a *lekton* ‘is separated from the signifying sound’. S.E. is therefore no longer reporting Stoic doctrine because the Stoics do not think *lekta* are the sort of things which can be separated from a body. Does this matter? Is not S.E. simply converting, by appealing to a well-known usage of ‘separated’, what the Stoics, in their jargon, identify as ‘an incorporeal something’?

S.E. has a track record of having recourse to the notion of separation to explain rather subtle and complex distinctions. Thus Epicurean properties (which Epicurus designates as ‘*sumbebēkota*’) are distinguished by S.E. (*M.* 10.221–3), as either ‘inseparable’ (‘*achōrista*’, e.g. resistance for body) or ‘separated’ (‘*chōrizesthai*’, e.g. motion). But Epicurus himself does not use this sort of terminology, speaking rather of properties ‘being inherent’ (‘*enuparchon*’) or ‘not inherent’ (‘*ouk enuparchousai*’ at *Her.* 55). The properties, which S.E. neatly deals with as separable and separated, turn out, in the more nuanced and subtle account given in Epicurus’ *Letter to Herodotus*, to ‘not exist in addition as other distinct things’, but only ever as ‘escorting the body’.⁵ In other words, Epicurean properties are never separated, or separable, for the main reason that, for Epicurus, there is nothing there to separate from

ἀπὸ σώματος· οὐδὲν δὲ ἀσώματος ἀπὸ σώματος χωρίζεται· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐφάπτεται σώματος ἀσώματος· ἢ δὲ ψυχὴ καὶ ἐφάπτεται καὶ χωρίζεται τοῦ σώματος· οὐκ ἄρα ἀσώματος ἡ ψυχὴ, ‘Chrysippus says: death is the separation of the soul from the body; but nothing incorporeal can be separated from the body; for nothing incorporeal can be in contact with the body; but the soul can be both in contact and separated from the body; therefore the soul is not incorporeal’. See also S.E. *M.* 9.198; Tertullian *An.* 5.6 who refers to Chrysippus as polishing the argument first put forward by Zeno and Cleanthes. The argument is mentioned as invalid by Alex. *Mant.* 117.21–3.

⁴ As mentioned in a different context in 1.1.5 above. See D.L. 7.151; Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1078E; Alex. *Mixt.* begins for us (from 213.2), after a lacuna in the text, with the question of how it is possible for two bodies to blend through and through: ‘τοῦτο γὰρ ὑπεραίρει καὶ τὰς ἐν τοῖς μύθοις παραδοξολογίας, ὃ τίθησι Χρύσιππος ὅσον ἐν τούτῳ τὸ δύνασθαι τὰ κεκραμένα χωρίζεσθαι πάλιν’, ‘for this goes beyond even the wonders we hear in fables, that which Chrysippus posits, namely that in this blending it is possible that the items which have been blended can be separated once again’ (Alex. *Mixt.* 213.6–8).

⁵ Epicurus, *Her.* 69: ‘οὐθ’ ὡς ἕτερ’ ἅττα προσυπάρχοντα τούτῳ ἀσώματα’ (‘not as some other kind of incorporeals existing in addition’), and a few lines down: ‘συμπαρakoλουθούντος δὲ τοῦ

the body. True enough, there is a distinction: one which, in the Epicurean text, is set out between properties which are ‘permanent’ or ‘eternal’ (*aïdion*), and those which vanish (*apollumenai*) only when the body-aggregate itself dissolves.⁶ And true enough, there are questions and difficulties about the terms of this distinction.⁷ Be this as it may, S.E.’s recourse to separation is a misleading oversimplification.

The same tendency is at work when it comes to the Stoics on the status of incorporeals. S.E. is not merely interchanging one way of speaking with another, but proceeding to a simplification which seeks to put the Epicureans, the Stoics, and the Platonists on the same level. The latter provide the prototype for the relation of separation, as S.E. reminds us, for instance at *M.* 11.29, ‘that which participates in the Idea . . . is separated (*kechōrismenōn*) and does not exemplify a single element of mutual inclusion (*oudemian perilēpsin*)’. All the dogmatic schools are thus shown to hold to the same basic relation between something incorporeal, considered to be separated from something corporeal: whether it be the non-existent Epicurean properties, the Platonic Forms, or the Stoic incorporeals. But just as it appears in the case of Epicurus, so it is with the Stoics: the relation they are describing is far more peculiar to them, and sufficiently contrasted from other accounts, for the application here of the notion of separation to be the source of a misinterpretation.⁸ The mistake, as will be argued in the following pages, is to consider that the Stoics distinguish between different *lekta* on the basis of the expressions which express them, which would therefore invalidate the claims for a distinction between *lekta* and signifiers.

S.E.’s aim is to show that there are no such things as *lekta*, because saying of *lekta* that they are independently real things, ‘*tina*’, which are incorporeal, implies that they are separated from the expressions that get them said. But this is contradicted, according to S.E., by the accounts the Stoics give of *lekta* as identified through the expressions that get them said. However, on close examination, S.E. is wrong to assume that *lekta* are identified by the utterances which express them.

ἀθρόου καὶ οὐθαμῇ ἀποσχιζομένου’ (‘but escorting the whole and never divided from it’). See 6.4.3 below.

⁶ See Epicurus *Her.* 70–1 and 55.

⁷ Lucretius himself, in his transmission of this piece of doctrine, betrays some uncertainty as to the degree of permanency of the permanent properties, the ‘*coniuncta*’ in his translation (see *DRN* 1.451–4), as ‘they cannot be detached without leading to total destruction of the body’, compared to the ‘*eventa*’ whose ‘coming and going’ (‘*adventu . . . abituque*’, *DRN* 1.456) leave bodies intact. It would seem that Epicurus has something more fundamental in mind when he speaks of the permanence of the eternal properties, which are those of the eternal atoms, see Epicurus *Her.* 41. See on this SEDLEY 1988.

⁸ Nor is the Platonic picture as schematic as S.E. would have it: twenty-five centuries of scholarship can attest to that; for a contemporary perspective on the complexities involved see VLASTOS 1987.

6.1.2. The Kinds of *Lekta*: a Question of Language or Ontology?

As S.E. and D.L. report, there are different kinds of *lekta*. There is the *axiōma*, which we have already come across, but there is also the imperatival *lekton* (*prostaktikon*), the supplicative *lekton* (*euktikon*), the interrogative kind, or rather kinds (there is a distinction between yes/no questioning (*erōtēmata*), and investigative questions (*pusmata*)⁹), the imprecatory kind (*aratikon*), the jurative (*horkikon*), the more-than-an-*axiōma* kind. The list varies, but these are the core kinds we find mentioned in our two most trusted sources.¹⁰ It is not the number of the kinds and variations in our sources which are our main concern here, but two foundational and related points: (i) that there is a marked difference between the kinds of *lekta* and, as we shall see, their linguistic counterpart, and (ii) that this difference is articulated in the very precise wording of the definitions provided for each of the kinds.

There is, to start with the latter point (ii), a rigid set formula in which all the different kinds of *lekta* are presented. They are all set in the following form:

lekton kind Y, is the kind by which, in getting it said, we φ .

e.g.: ‘an imperatival *lekton* is the thing in saying which we make a command’¹¹

φ qualifies the utterance we make when we actually get a certain *lekton* said. And this is why, in the literature, scholars speak of the differences between the *lekta* as differences between what we have come to consider, in the twentieth century and especially since J. L. Austin, as speech acts.¹² The uttering of grammatically correct meaningful sentences has been famously theorized by Austin, notably in his 1962 *How to Do Things with Words*, in terms of speech acts, or illocutionary acts, which have become a central question in the philosophy of language of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Commands, oaths, prayers, etc., alongside statements, are analysed as different kinds of speech acts: i.e. kinds of actions performed by means of speech, or following Austin, how ‘by saying something, we do something’.¹³

There are clear points of contact, namely in that the Stoics think that by getting a *lekton* said, we manage to do something, for instance, to command, swear, assert, ask a question, etc. But there is a question about whether the Stoics are primarily interested in characterizing what we do when we speak. For, as the descriptive formulae suggest, the Stoics are interested, not in the saying itself, but in the content of speech, the *lekton*, which is distinct from

⁹ See 5.1.3.4 (end) with n.48 above.

¹⁰ S.E. *M.* 8.71–5 and D.L. 7.65–8. On the kinds and the different lists from various testimonies, see SCHENKEVELD 1984 esp. 302–11.

¹¹ ‘προστακτικὸν δέ ἐστι πρᾶγμα ὃ λέγοντες προστάσσομεν’, as in D.L. 7.66–7 and S.E. 8.71–3.

¹² NUCHELMANS 1973 p.64ff.; SCHENKEVELD 1984; HÜLSER 2012.

¹³ Cf. AUSTIN 1962 pp.94, 108: this is the basic formula Austin builds on, all the better to elaborate finer distinction as to what the doing and what the thing that we do consist in.

speech. The Stoics think that it is not in the saying itself that something gets done, in the relevant (Austinian) sense, but that saying is an action, which picks out a specific kind of *lekton*. This *lekton* is already imperatival, questioning, injunctive, and so on. When the *lekton* is expressed it determines the nature of the speech in question (which is then a command, a question, and so on.). It is therefore not the uttering that does anything in the relevant sense. Expressing the *lekton* is a question of voicing and communicating it, rather than contributing something additional to it which is not already contained within the *lekton*. The transition into language thus does not itself add anything to what is already present in the *lekton*.

In discussing *lekta*, it would seem that the Stoics are not discussing speech acts at all. They are rather developing a question in ontology, namely that the *lekta*, which co-constitute reality, by holding together its logical structure, come in different kinds. These different kinds, since they are *lekta* and therefore there to be said, make it the case that speech comes in different forms, as it expresses the different *lekta* (commands, questions, exclamations, and so on). This strange view raises formidable questions, for it is the view that reality is co-constituted by incorporeal *lekta*, of which some are imperatival, others exclamative, assertive, injunctive, etc.

The characteristics that we associate with linguistic attitudes (exclamative, injunctive, declarative, etc.) are here shown to be structural articulations of ontology. This is difficult for both a modern-day reader, and presumably also an ancient reader, to accept (not least because of the over-population this implies amongst the incorporeal *lekta*). We moderns are used to thinking of these phenomena as belonging to the concerns of grammar and linguistics, and generally to the philosophy and theories of language. For the Stoics there are no such separate disciplines. In fact, the Stoic account of *lekta* contributes greatly to the founding of these disciplines at a later stage. For the foundational terminology and classifications that the first Grammarians establish are appropriations of the logical articulations found in the philosophers, and in particular the Stoics.¹⁴

One explanation for this appropriation, which is not hard to follow, is that the Grammarians are not interested in metaphysics and take what the Stoics say about *lekta* for an analysis of what we say when we speak, disregarding the questions of the independent reality of *lekta*, as do, generally, the critics and rival philosophical schools. Thus the difficulty, which consists of thinking that structural elements of the world have characteristics such as exclamative or

¹⁴ See FREDE 1987a esp. p.354ff. on the appropriation by the first professional Grammarians of aspects of Stoic logic, especially concerning *lekta*, into questions of grammar properly speaking; also FREDE 1987b on the Stoics' anticipation of grammatical concerns. For a detailed analysis of Apollonius Dyscolus' merging the questions pertaining to what is signified (*ta sēmainomena*) with what signifies (*ta sēmainonta*) see ILDEFONSE 1997 p.262ff.

injunctive articulations, is removed. The Grammarians convert the relevant accounts into questions of grammar and syntax familiar to us since then.¹⁵ S.E. follows the same direction of interpretation when he attacks the Stoics, claiming that the different *lekta* are in fact, despite what the Stoics say, distinguished on the basis of their expression. He collapses the analysis of what gets said into how it is said. But the very fact that the Grammarians reshape the Stoic account of *lekta* into a theory of grammar, and the very fact that S.E. goes to such lengths to show the impossibility of distinguishing *lekta* from the words that utter them, indicate that the Stoics (whether the theory holds or not) develop an account which is in contrast with these subsequent interpretations and critiques. They hold to the distinction between an incorporeal *lekton* on the one hand and signifying speech on the other.

One question which arises is whether this part of the theory of *lekta* (that there are kinds of *lekta* other than *axiōmata*) is not a further development which the Stoics find themselves committed to because of an original view, rooted in ontology, that states-of-affairs are *lekta*. Thus, once the linguistic dimension is taken into account, it becomes necessary to set out a detailed schema of how every different kind of content of speech has a corresponding distinct kind of *lekton*. One might thus think that the different *lekta* are a binding follow-up on an original focus on *axiōmata*, which are either true or false.

However, nothing in the texts would suggest that the classification of different *lekta* is a later development. Dialectic, after all, is for the Stoics 'the science of what is true, false, and neither true nor false' (D.L. 7.62). It would seem that the *lekta* the Stoics are most interested in are the *axiōmata*, those which are either true or false.¹⁶ But that is because of their interest in arguments and syllogistic. This interest, however, does not alter the foundational ontology. In this light, the Stoics' commitment to the kinds of *lekta* as items in ontology is just as foundational as their account of the *axiōma*. What we must therefore explain is why the Stoics put at the same level, logically and ontologically, all the kinds of *lekta*, whether they are *axiōmata*, prayers, or commands.

S.E.'s critical interpretation constitutes the ultimate cut-off point. For he informs us that the Stoics hold that the *lekta* and the words used to express them are distinct, though for him, all the Stoics say is based on what we utter.

¹⁵ E.g. Ap. Dync. *Synt.* 3.346.2ff. lists the different verbal modes (*enkliseis*), which correspond to the classification of conjugated verbs, and which are subsequently explained in relation to 'the things (*pragmata*) which they reveal'. Thus the indicative mode (*horistikē*) is used to make declarations (*Synt.* 3.346.4–347.1), whereas the optative mode (*euktikē*) is used to make prayers (*Synt.* 3.350.3–4). It is purely a matter of proper conjugation that determines what we say.

¹⁶ The greatest part of D.L.'s summary of Stoic logical doctrine (spanning from D.L. 7.49 to 7.82) is devoted to the analysis of *axiōmata* and the arguments and syllogisms constructed by them.

To do justice to the Stoics, it is their distinction which we must defend as far as possible. One midway solution is to conflate, as commentators have done, the Stoic theory of the kinds of *lekta* with speech act theory. This is a solution insofar as, in response to S.E., a distinction is maintained between the utterance and the result of the utterance. We have already adumbrated reasons why that is not the distinction the Stoics are committed to. It is however worth going into further detail about the risks of presenting the Stoic theory as a speech act theory (6.2 below). Following from this, the Stoic position must be reconsidered afresh. First, by pursuing further the investigation into the critique, in addition to S.E., from the Peripatetics (6.3 below) and the Epicureans (6.4 below), which focuses on the ontological status of *lekta*. These attacks bring into sharper focus the fundamental grounds on which the Stoics base their account of the independent status of *lekta*. The fundamental articulation the Stoics analyse is the propositional articulation, as referred to in earlier sections of this book (esp. 2.2.4 above). This helps to give at least one answer to why the kinds of *lekta* should be considered equally as kinds of *lekta*, namely because all the different kinds of *lekta* stand in relation to a propositional content, the *axiōma* as well as the question or the command. The kinds of *lekta* are, as such, functions of a propositional articulation, as a certain number of texts confirm.¹⁷

6.2. *LEKTA* AND SPEECH ACTS

6.2.1. *Lekta* and Us

For the Stoics, two different things are involved in getting a *lekton* said. This emerges from the formulae used to describe the different kinds of *lekta*:

lekton kind Y, is the kind by which, in getting it said, we φ .

There is a Y and a φ . The Y stands for a qualifier of the specific kind of *lekton* (e.g. imperatival, asserting, questioning), and the φ qualifies the utterance we produce (a command, an assertion, a question). Thus, Y is related to φ , such that Y determines φ . However, φ does not necessarily follow from Y. And Y is Y regardless of φ . This asymmetric relation is nothing other than the relation between uttering and saying, *prophēresthai* and *legein*, as discussed in 5.1.3 above. When we utter a command, ask a question, assert a statement—these

¹⁷ The kinds of *lekta* which get said when we make a command, a prohibition, or an assertion are related insofar as they are functions of one and the same propositional content: e.g. Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1037D–F: in commanding not to steal, we thereby also forbid stealing and assert that one should not steal. See more at 9.1.2 below.

are all cases of when saying and uttering coincide. Thus the distinctions between kinds of *lekta* illustrate the Stoic account of the production of meaningful speech, whereby saying and uttering coincide. This comes down to the utterance of a string of words, successfully combined so as to express a *lekton*. When this coincidence occurs, we make assertions, or commands, or prayers, etc. But it is not the actual uttering which produces the features which make what is said either a statement, or a question, and so on—that is something about the *lekton* itself. The Stoics are therefore not claiming that saying is in fact just uttering. But S.E. still maintains that ‘every *lekton* must be said’.¹⁸ He thereby denies that there is a *Y* without a φ -utterance.

It is, in fact, following in S.E.’s footsteps that recent interpreters take the Stoics to be pioneers in the philosophy of language for having set out differences between speech acts. For they too, take the Stoics to distinguish different *lekta* on the basis of the utterances thereby produced.¹⁹ However, at close inspection, the very formulation by which the different kinds of *lekta* are characterized is testimony to the Stoic commitment that saying and uttering are distinct. But they can coincide: this is the aspectual force of the present participle ‘in saying’ (*legontes*), present in all the formulae, indicating that whenever we get *lekton* *Y* actually said, then we φ . It is interchangeable in our texts (D.L. 7.65–7; S.E. *M.* 8.70–4) with the optative formula in Greek ‘if someone were to say’ (*ei legoi ti*). These clauses add similar circumstantial weight, indicating the possibility or eventuality of getting a *lekton* actually said. They reaffirm the pre-linguistic character of *lekton* *Y*, which is the *lekton* *Y* it is, there, available to be said, whether or not we actually say it. But, whenever we actually get it said, by uttering the appropriate words, we thereby φ . The *lekton* *Y* is distinguishable, moreover, from the utterance we can produce, by its being clearly identified as a thing, distinct from us, in contrast to φ , which is what we do, and is thus dependent on us doing it. In D.L. 7.66–8, as the formulae are listed, the word ‘*pragma*’, (‘thing’), is inserted each time as a reminder that each kind of *lekton* is a thing—the thing which we get said, and thereby we φ .²⁰ For example:

an imperatival is a thing (*pragma*) in saying which, we command²¹

¹⁸ S.E. *M.* 8.80: ‘πάν τε λεκτὸν λέγεσθαι δεῖ’.

¹⁹ Thus, when HÜLSER 2012 p.43 writes that ‘*lekta* are conceptualized on the basis of linguistic pragmatics’, I take it that, on this interpretation, it is the variety of forms of utterances which are considered as determining a corresponding variety of *lekta*, presented as bound to utterances.

²⁰ Recall that, as we saw in 5.1.3 above from D.L. 7.57: it is things (*pragmata*), i.e. *lekta*, which get said (*legesthai*). D.L.’s source is thus consistently recalling that *lekta* are these *pragmata*, the objects of saying.

²¹ D.L. 7.67: ‘προστακτικὸν δέ ἐστι πρᾶγμα ὃ λέγοντες προτάσσομεν’.

The term '*pragma*' is omitted in the formulae as they are reported in the parallel pages in S.E. But, as we saw, in S.E.'s conclusion (*M.* 8.75) it is definitely the separate ontological status of the *lekton* that is S.E.'s target.

The distinction between Υ and φ is present in the terminology: we make a command (*prostassomen*) when we get an imperativ or commanding (*prostaktikon*) *lekton* said, or we make a supplication, or prayer (*euchometha*) when we get a supplicative (*euktikon*) *lekton* said, or we make an assertion (*apophainometha*) when we get an *axiōma* said. The list goes on. There is an uttering which we, as speakers, enact, which is then related to a non-linguistic characterization of the *lekton*. The adjectival forms ending in *-tikon* (in *prostaktikon*, *euktikon*, *aratikon* (injunctive, supplicative and imprecatory) indicate as much: namely that this characteristic belongs to the *lekton* and not to the linguistic activity which eventually gets acted out through uttering the right sequence of words. There are exceptions to the morphological binomen: some kinds of *lekta* have their own distinctive designation as in the case of the *axiōma*, or the question (*erōtēma*), or the inquiry (*pusma*). The terminological divide is, in these cases, all the more clear: there is one thing which is the *lekton*, and another which is our linguistic activity.

What is more, the Stoics speak of the *axiōma*, the *prostaktikon*, the *euktikon*, the *aratikon* and so on, rather than the *apophansis* (assertion), the *entolē* (command), or the *euchē* (prayer), which are the terms used by the Aristotelians when they discuss different kinds or forms of sentences.²² For it is kinds of sentences which are discussed within the Peripatetic tradition, starting with Aristotle's distinction (from *Int.* 4) between sentences which are either true or false, which are the focus of logic, and all the others, which are said to belong to the study of rhetoric. Aristotle does not distinguish these sentences, which he calls *logoi*, into something akin to signifiers and what is signified. He considers sentences as meaningful, whose meaning is the result of the combination of meaningful words. The tradition, which flows from Aristotle, stays faithful to this account of meaningful sentences. Thus, though, as we shall see shortly, the Aristotelian commentators assimilate some of the distinctions between kinds of utterances which come from the Stoics, the terms no longer reflect the distinction they are meant to reflect for the Stoics, namely between *lekta* and utterances. What is strikingly distinctive, original,

²² Aristotle *Int.* 4, 17a4, speaks of the prayer, *euchē*, and see Alex. in *An. Pr.* 17.4–5. We know that the sophist Protagoras (reported in D.L. 9.53–4, according to whom Protagoras was the first to do so) had already distinguished kinds of *logoi*, i.e. kinds of sentences, into four (wish, question, answer, and command). This is not a distinction in logic, but in rhetoric, as is emphasized in the context (other classifications are mentioned, more specifically rhetorical, e.g. narration, as distinct from descriptions, D.L. 9.54). Arist. *Poet.* 19, 1456b9–13 associates this very same Protagorean list of *logoi* to the '*schēmata tēs lexeōs*' ('modes of utterance') belonging to the domain of expertise of the actor. On Protagoras and the contributions from the sophists to rules of rhetoric, see PFEIFFER 1968 p.37f.

and ultimately derided by their critics (Sceptic and Peripatetic), is that, for the Stoics, neither of the elements related to the production of meaningful speech, specifically, the Y and φ from their formulae, turn out to qualify the sentences produced. For Y qualifies something which is pre-linguistic, given that it characterizes the internal articulation of *lekton* as an ontological item, whether the *lekton* is actually said or not; and φ characterizes what kind of linguistic activity is involved (grammar, word order, etc.). The result, i.e. the uttered sentence, is then anticipated but is not itself accounted for.

6.2.2. Ordinary Language: Have the Stoics Always been Misunderstood?

Austin makes speech act theory a landmark in the study of logic and language, and a great shift of perspective from the twenty-three or so preceding centuries, which are dominated by the (originally Aristotelian) focus on all and only those sentences which are either true or false.²³ What is ground-breaking in Austin's approach is, firstly, the distinction between 'constative' and 'performative' speech acts: the former correspond to reporting a state-of-affairs, which is either true or false, the latter consist in creating one through the very act of speech. Secondly, and most importantly, Austin directs logical analysis to level out these two classes of speech acts by noting that both actually depend on similar modes of assessment of the conditions for their realization. That is to say that the conditions for the performativity of speech acts (e.g. the conditions for a command to actually be a command) are as constraining as the truth conditions which govern the constativity of assertions or statements.

Thus, in the case of a command: a command is a command if and only if there is an interlocutor who both understands the utterance as a command and obeys the injunction. Similarly with a statement: 'S is P' is true if and only if S is P, and false otherwise. The move to set out conditions for performativity, on the same basis as we set out conditions for truth value, propelled the topic of speech acts from a question for grammarians to a central question in the philosophy of language. The controversy on the grounds for this levelling out, and on whether performative speech acts should not also have truth values, has not ceased to this day. But it is not my present purpose to address the contemporary state of play.²⁴ Rather, I mention Austin and speech act theory to underline two crucial questions about the Stoics: do they agree that circumstances of speech play a role in the performance of a speech act? And do they think there is a difference akin to the constative and performative

²³ See AUSTIN 1962, Lecture 1, p.4ff.; and on the 'revolution in philosophy' of this approach, as Austin calls it (pp.3–4), see SMITH 1990.

²⁴ See RECANATI 2013 for a mapping out of the current state of the debate.

distinction? We shall end up answering both these questions with a yes and no. This is because the *lekton* is a thing in reality which cannot easily be assimilated to the moderns' configuration. Though the parallel between Austin and the Stoics is tempting, we should resist it.

The scholarship which celebrates speech act theory in Stoicism is largely influenced by the contemporary debate, often at the expense of a reappraisal of Stoic ontological commitments, in particular with regard to *lekta*. The reason why it is hard to resist projecting speech act theory on the Stoics is that it looks as though the Stoics indeed identify speech acts. The Stoics stand out in the history of ancient logic in including what seemingly are performative speech acts (commands, prayers, etc.) as a part of logic (what the Stoics call dialectic), as kinds of *lekta*. What is more, the account given for commands, prayers, oaths, etc. is considered on a par with that given for the statement-making or assertible kind of *lekton* (i.e. the *axiōma*). This has driven scholars in Stoic studies to consider the Stoics as forebears of Austin's 'revolution in philosophy', that of including speech acts in logical analysis alongside propositions.²⁵ On close inspection, however, the Stoics are not talking about the same thing, though the assimilation, in the Peripatetic tradition, of the nomenclature of the kinds of *lekta* into the classification of types of sentences facilitates the confusion.

As noted above, the Stoic names for the kinds of *lekta* become the norm by which to refer to the different kinds of sentences. Thus Ammonius, in his commentary on Aristotle's *De Interpretatione* (in *de Int.* 2.10–25), refers to Aristotle's distinguishing the assertoric sentence (*logos apophantikos*) from all other 'types of sentences' (*'eidē logou'*), of which (including the assertoric) there are five in total. The enumeration (which includes the apostrophe, the command, the question, the prayer, and the statement) are all designated with familiar terms from the Stoic lists as they appear in D.L. 7.65–8 and S.E. 8.70–5. But they are not qualifiers of *lekta* any longer. Only the now standardized application (by Ammonius' time) of the adjectival form in *-tikon* recalls the Stoic origin, betrayed in the somewhat over-zealous coinage '*erōtēmatikon*' for the question, which the Stoics leave as '*erōtēma*'.²⁶ This is also due to the contribution of the Grammarians, who contribute to shifting this terminology to describe formal aspects of sentences.²⁷ Ammonius further adds that the Stoics expand the list of five types of sentences to include

²⁵ E.g. HÜLSER 2012 p.41.

²⁶ This is a hyper-technicalization of terminology, which the Stoics are so often accused of but which we see here is adopted by precisely the authors who accuse the Stoics.

²⁷ See n.15 above; the Greek Grammarians fix a nomenclature for the types of sentences on the basis of the grammatical case of the grammatical subject of a sentence (e.g. the apostrophe is a type of sentence (*klētikon*), which takes its name from the vocative case (*klētikē*) of the grammatical subject (e.g. in Ap. Dys. *Synt.* 3.369.10–370.14), or on the basis of the pronoun in place of the grammatical subject, making the sentence indefinite, determinate, interrogative, etc.

more sentences, but shows that some of the Stoic suggestions merely overlap with the core five of the Peripatetic doctrine.²⁸ This remark by Ammonius is precious, as it testifies to how distant the discussion is, by his time, from the concerns which underlie the Stoic distinctions. Ammonius focuses on names, based on the grammatical identity of the components of a sentence: thus any sentence in the interrogative mode can and should be classified as a question, and distinctions between kinds of questionings are reduced to mere quibbling about nomenclature—the latter is what the Stoic distinctions are shown to amount to. But if the Stoics insist on a distinction between different kinds of interrogative sentences, it is because they are not distinguishing between interrogative sentences, but between different kinds of things said, and which happen to have in common that interrogative forms of utterances are used to express them. Ammonius, writing in the fifth century AD, exemplifies for us the result of both the influence of the Stoics on the debates on logic and linguistic theories, and the confusion about what the Stoics were talking about, with the ultimate dismissal of a set of distinctions, which already, in his heterodoxy, Seneca himself (first century AD) had suggested ‘might be false and in any case useless’ (Sen. *Ep.* 117.20).

In fact, it is only with the emergence of twentieth-century philosophy of logic and language, especially the developments in logic proposed and triggered by the works of Frege, that the specificity of Stoic logic is rediscovered.²⁹ For these theories, from Frege on, though out of different concerns than those that motivate the Stoics, consider distinctions of the kind the Stoics have in mind to be, *pace* Seneca, plausibly true, and in any case useful. But a dynamic twentieth-century reappraisal of the Stoics, though helpful, is so only to the extent that we avoid making amalgamations too hastily. For, if only on account of the commitment to the reality of *lekta* and their distinction as unified distinct items from signifiers, it is preferable to be cautious when using the twentieth-century lens to read the Stoics.³⁰

(e.g. the interrogative pronoun makes the sentence interrogative, an ‘*erôtēmatikon*’, in Dion. Th. A.G. 32.2–33.5) See further ILDEFONSE 1997 p.372ff.

²⁸ Ammonius (*in de Int.* 2.26–3.6) does not mention *lekta* at all, but sticks to questions of nomenclature, considering that the Peripatetic ‘*λόγων εἶδη*’ (‘forms (or types) of sentences’) are also what the Stoics have in mind. He notes that three of the kinds the Stoics mention are mere alternative names for three of the core five of the Peripatetics: thus, according to Ammonius, the Stoics just substitute the term ‘*axiōma*’ for what he, and the Peripatetic tradition he is passing on, call the ‘assertoric’ (‘*apophantikos logos*’); that the Stoics call ‘*aratikon*’ (‘imprecatory’) what the Peripatetics call ‘*euktikon*’ (‘prayer’); that the Stoics call ‘*prosgoreutikon*’ (‘address’) what the Peripatetics call ‘*klētikon*’ (‘apostrophe’) and that in addition to this, the Stoics add another five kinds: the *omotikon* (an oath in the name of god), the *ekthetikon* (a setting-out), the *hupotheikon* (hypothesis), the more-than-an-*axiōma*, and the *epaporētikon* (aporetic question).

²⁹ Thanks in particular to ŁUKASIEWICZ 1934 and MATES 1953.

³⁰ All interpretations which take seriously the Stoic notion of a *lekton* display such caution, observing that the force or function which characterizes a speech act is, on the Stoic account, to

The original concern which triggers the contemporary theories is fundamentally that of taking into account context and ordinary language usage, as also to consider these as crucial conditions for the successful performance of a speech act. Now, it will turn out that context and linguistic usage are factors the Stoics involve in the assessment of meaningful speech. However, the Stoics proceed from the exact opposite view, namely that language and context are utterly subordinated to logical and ontological structure. The analysis of this structure, it follows, is all there is to how language works, as language merely reflects the structure. In this, the Stoics may be considered as close, at least, to Frege's starting point, namely that of setting out logical relations and constituting a language of logic fit to express precisely these relations.³¹ In so doing, Frege establishes the foundations for an artificial language, freed from the imprecisions of ordinary language.³² But this is not the objective nor the problem for the Stoics. For the Stoic analysis, based on the account of *lekta* and the ontological structure they are part of, ultimately aims to produce an account of ordinary language as grounded in logical structure—thus very much in contrast with the Fregean ambition.

Seneca is a reliable witness in this respect. For he is, as mentioned above, extremely critical of the Stoic commitment to the priority of logical structure and the ontological distinction it marks between *lekta* and bodies. Seneca qualifies this commitment as 'shackles', to which the Greek Stoics are tied down ('vinculum' at *Ep.* 117.6). And yet, precisely because of how critical Seneca is, he reveals, however grudgingly, the purport and contribution of the theory—all the better to take it apart. Thus, one of Seneca's key points of attack consists in rebuking the Stoics for not living up to their own commitment of accounting for ordinary language. In his attack on Stoic orthodoxy, Seneca presents the Stoic view according to which wisdom is a body, namely the soul disposed in a certain way, and is distinct from the incorporeal *katēgorēma* [being wise]. This distinction—and this is the important point for the attack—is supposed to be revealed by ordinary language. For we say that wisdom is a good, because wisdom is a body, and a good is a body, but we do not say that [being wise] is a good, but rather that it is something which pertains to a good, since it is not a body, and goods are corporeal (*Ep.* 117.3). Seneca shows this is wrong since 'we do say that to be wise is good'.³³ There is room for fluid moves

be found not in the form of the utterance but in the *lekton*; see ATHERTON 1993 p.356ff.; CAMERON 2015a p.57f.

³¹ As set out in FREGE 1892. It is on the assumption of such an affinity with Frege that MATES 1961 p.19ff. produces a schema of correspondence between the logical entities identified by Frege, compared to the Stoics.

³² This is the starting point of the *Begriffsschrift*, FREGE 1879, the creation of a formal language: see further BARNES 2002.

³³ Sen. *Ep.* 117.3: 'quid ergo? Non dicimus bonum est sapere?', 'but what? Do we not say that it is good to be wise?'

of this kind especially in Latin, where there are no articles, so that '*bonum est*' can read as 'it is good' or 'it is a good'. The presence or absence of the article makes a difference. But this is not our concern here. Whether Seneca is right or merely playing with words, what is clear is that the accusation rests on an inadequacy to conform with the principles the Stoics are said to have set up for themselves, namely to show that ordinary language reflects logical structure. Seneca's critique (whether successful or not) consists in saying that the Stoics twist ordinary language. But his aim in thus criticizing the Greek Stoics is not in fact to distance himself from the Stoics, as he repeatedly appeals to an inclusive 'us' (i.e. us the Stoics). Rather, Seneca intends to return to the original Stoic pledge to abide by ordinary language; his critique transforms into a correction.³⁴ Thus, putting to one side the internal debates within the Stoic school, the commitment to respect ordinary language is confirmed, since the upheavals around it concern how best to preserve it.

The Stoics thus have a different perspective on the relation of logic to language from the way the question has been shaped in the contemporary debate. The Stoics hold equally to the reality of *lekta* (even the rebellious Seneca acknowledges their reality, see *Ep.* 117.13, though he questions their impact on ethics (cf. 8.1.2 below)) and to the logical grounding of ordinary language. For this reason, for the Stoics, statements, commands, prayers, oaths, etc. are not dependent on a receptive context, and are not dependent on the way we speak, but belong to the logical structure of reality.

6.2.3. Context and Content: the Stoics and the Moderns

Austin acknowledges a distinction between content (which Austin calls the 'locutionary act', Lecture VIII) and the illocutionary act, which builds on Frege's distinction between content and force.³⁵ On the basis of this distinction, different levels of illocutionary activity are distinguished under the banner of 'infelicities' (set out in Lecture I), which ramify into different

³⁴ Seneca is treading a fine line: on the one hand, he seemingly appeals to the frequent critique that the Stoics insert needlessly technical terminology (cf. 2.1.2 with n.17 above), but whereas Galen (e.g. *Inst. Log.* 4.6), or Plutarch (e.g. *Comm. Not.* 1068D) or Cicero (e.g. *Fin.* 3.5; 4.7) accuse the Stoics of inventing new words where there are no real distinctions to be made (and at the risk of self-contradiction, according to Plutarch), Seneca acknowledges that there are things there to be identified and distinguished, and that it is ordinary language use which reveals them; but, for Seneca, if ordinary language does not mark any distinctions, then there is no room to make any.

³⁵ As in FREGE 1879 chap. 1 §2, in which the content of an assertion is distinguished from the assertoric force by which the speaker adds to the utterance of the content, the recognition (since we are talking about assertions here) of the truth of this content. The content is what FREGE 1892 also calls the thought (*Gedanke*). See HANKS 2007 for a reappraisal of the influence of Frege's distinction, in what has become the specialized inquiry into speech acts since Austin.

circumstantial conditions, such that the absence of some, or weakness of others, may invalidate the actual performance of a speech act (though the formal requirements of the utterance are satisfied). Distinctions are thus made between the degrees of the hearer's involvement (his understanding of what is said, and his reacting accordingly) for a speech act to be successful. Other lines of inquiry pursue the speaker's and hearer's knowledge of each other, as the implicit explanations of how one and the same utterance produces different speech acts in different circumstances, involving different people (Lecture X).

In critiques and further expansions on the topic, the contemporary debate on speech acts has oriented itself towards an analysis of the implications concerning the interaction between speaker and hearer, which the successful performance of a speech act is taken to depend on. At the very least, a hearer is always implied and taken into account: thus the illocutionary act will have been performed only if the hearer acknowledges it. A command is not a command if the hearer does not understand, in hearing the utterance, that he is to obey it by doing whatever it is that has been commanded of him. This is why the notion of performativity is fundamental to speech-act theory: something must be done, in saying something, for something to have been actually said. There is a question whether the Stoics would agree on this, since the performance of a speech act comes down to getting a *lekton* expressed which, being of this or that kind, determines, in advance, the features of the utterance.

If there are too many infelicities, as Austin notes, the performance of the speech act fails to occur. However, there still might be the possibility of conveying the content of the thought (to speak like Frege). John Searle, in developing this point further, makes a distinction between what he calls 'the proposition' which is expressed in performing a speech-act (the latter being any speech act, an assertion, a question, or an order, etc.), and the speech act itself.³⁶ The Searlian 'proposition' is not itself a speech act, but is concomitantly expressed, along with the speech act, such that different speech acts may correlate to one and the same proposition. The proposition here is the content; the common content in (say) 'have you read all of Joyce?' and 'you should read all of Joyce'. It is a content which is bound to linguistic expression. Thus, when we perform a speech act, we do two things: (i) perform the speech act and (ii) express a proposition. If we fail to perform (i), we still express (ii), though the expression of this content is, in any event, dependent on linguistic capacity.

For the Stoics the speech act is determined before any utterance is carried out. There are seeming points of affinity with the Searlian view, especially with

³⁶ SEARLE 1969 *esp.* p.29f.

Searle's move to isolate a propositional content.³⁷ But Searle denies any room for a pre-linguistic stage relative to this content—the structural, metaphysical stage, foundational for the Stoics, in which are grounded the *lekta*. This is the irremediable rift between the Stoics and the twentieth- and twenty-first-century logicians: that alongside questions about language usage, and about context, Stoic logic and metaphysics accommodate—and as we are seeing in these pages, are grounded on—*lekta*. The real question, then, is whether the kinds of *lekta* are speech acts at all. The reason some aspects of the contemporary account seem to fit, but actually do not, is that the Stoics are not theorizing about language. Rather, questions of language accompany the main analysis, which is in ontology. But because of this, a great confusion arises. Are the moderns, and the ancient critics, much more sensible and economical in their theory of language? For commentators who think the Stoics are developing a theory of language, *lekta* are utterly redundant items (this is the Peripatetic line). For commentators who realize the Stoics do not mean to discuss language, but questions of ontology, the Stoics are mistaken and should be—and in fact are, despite themselves—discussing questions of language (this is, at heart, S.E.'s standpoint).

For the Stoics, the role of the speaker is to use the right words, with correct grammar, and in the appropriate way; in other words, to gain mastery of the virtues of speech, as discussed at 5.1.3.3 above. What is appropriate (*to prepon*) is one of these virtues. As we saw, it is the virtue of speech which requires the speaker to take into account the particular audience or interlocutor in the particular context of speech. In order properly to express the relevant *lekton*, it is part of the speaker's task to come to be aware of a complex question of context in which the interlocutor, what he or she knows or is expected to know, and where the exchange takes place, all play a decisive role in how to say what is meant to get said. It follows that one and the same expression, when delivered to a different audience or interlocutor, might not get one and the same *lekton* said.

The context thus determines the kind of *lekton* an utterance expresses. The same utterance can sometimes be used to express different kinds of *lekta*. To take up again the example of the first line of the *Iliad*, Protagoras (the first thinker to have considered the different forms of speech, see n.22 above), is reported by Aristotle (*Poet.* 19, 1456b9–18), to have claimed that 'Sing, Goddess, the wrath of Achilles' is a command and not a prayer. Aristotle, briefly mentioning Protagoras' remark, refers it to a question of quality of the

³⁷ The common content, or proposition, which different speech acts share for Searle, has echoes of the Stoic view, reported by Plutarch (n.17 above) that commands, prohibitions, and assertions consist in different relations to one and the same propositional content. This propositional content, however, is not a linguistic part of an utterance (as on Searle's account). See 9.1.2 below.

delivery and elocution, which belong to the speaker and not to what is expressed.³⁸ What Aristotle thus reserves to the art of delivery (*hupokritikē*) corresponds, on the Stoic view, to the larger question of the circumstances and context of utterance of a particular speaker. As Aristotle says himself, it is the circumstances in which the line is uttered, namely by a poet or bard addressing himself to a goddess, which determine that the line is a prayer and not a command, though an imperative is used. Presumably Protagoras' point—as someone who classified forms of speech according to grammatical features such as, for instance, modes and tenses of verbs—is that imperatives are used to express commands. Aristotle does not distinguish between the expression and the content, but only between expression and delivery. He therefore puts all the onus of uttering a prayer on a correct interpretation of the expression by the speaker/actor. Whilst we can see why Aristotle would dismiss Protagoras here as a mere pedant, Protagoras' position expresses some legitimate concerns, those of a need to regiment linguistic practices to account for regularities between expression and desired effect, and to avoid ambiguities, some of which are context-sensitive. The Stoics share those concerns without abandoning the common-sense attitude formulated by Aristotle. The further distinction that the Stoics make, between content (the *lekton*), expression, and context of delivery, is therefore a conciliation of the two approaches. For the Stoics adopt into their analysis of *lekta* (and not of expressions) the distinctions that Protagoras was the first to point to, between prayers, commands, and apostrophes.

Thus, the difference of context determines a difference between two different kinds of *lekta*, between a *lekton euktikon*, a supplicatory *lekton*, and a *prostaktikon*, or injunctive *lekton*. The same association of words can express both.³⁹ But the actual form of the utterance is not enough to express a *lekton*. Actors, for example, Chrysippus points out,⁴⁰ say 'things' (*pragmata*): 'they say things and they signify things'. But they do not thereby actually ask questions, swear, pray, or whichever further kind of speech act their utterances seemingly contribute to perform. For, true enough, their utterances express the *lekta* which, said in different circumstances, would be the kind of *lekta* saying which a speaker would perform the relevant speech acts. However, the circumstances of utterance are such that what they say is neither actually true or false, nor actually an order, nor a question, nor a prayer, etc., because an

³⁸ That is why Aristotle dismisses Protagoras' remark as not belonging to the poetic art, but to that of the actor, thus contrasting composition with delivery.

³⁹ SCHENKEVELD 1984 p.313.

⁴⁰ Chrysippus *Log. Inv.* PHerc. 307, col.9, 13–16 (mentioned at 5.1.3.1 n.20 above): 'ὕποκριτὰ λέγου||σιν μὲν τὰ πράγματα καὶ ση||μαίνουσιν οὐτε δὲ ὀμνύουσιν || οὐτε προσάπτουσιν οὐτ' ἀρῶν|ται οὐτε ἐρωτῶσιν οὐτε πυνθάνονται', 'thus with actors: they signify the things (*ta pragmata*) but they neither swear, nor command, nor pray, nor ask, nor learn from something', in MARRONE 1997 p.92

actor, when he acts, does not really ask questions, give an order, or pray. This small fragmentary discussion from the *Logical Investigations* does not provide us with much explanation, but rather, as in most of the discussions of the *Logical Investigations*, Chrysippus raises some questions.⁴¹

6.2.4. Actors and Fake-talk

The questions turn, in part, on what Aristotle tries to dismiss in the passage from the *Poetics* about Protagoras, namely that there is a problem regarding the rules of correct expression. For certain modes, tenses and syntactical constructions are rightly categorized according to what they express (e.g., the imperative mode for commands), but those categories remain ambiguous. Chrysippus also draws attention to a question, which is specific to Stoic logic and the place of *lekta*. For he is puzzling over what makes the things signified, the *pragmata* (which are *lekta*), actually expressed. An actor on stage, but also, for instance, the grammar teacher, giving an example of an interrogative sentence, may well ask: ‘what time is it?’; but neither the former nor the latter will have actually asked what the time is, for lack of appropriate conditions of utterance. Nor have they *not* asked what the time is. For both express something which signifies a question about what time it is. Chrysippus thus highlights something fundamental about *lekta*, namely that a *lekton* contains all there is to signify, but that it is up to the speaker to actualize what is there to signify.

Chrysippus does not expand or clarify what the things (*pragmata*) are that are signified—could he be thinking of the *pragmata* as a propositional content, which is yet to be formulated in a statement, a question, a command, and so on? Probably not, since the sentences considered already have all the characteristics of a question, a command, or a prayer, etc. The actor is, after all, pretending to be asking questions, making statements, commands and so on. Indeed, the whole puzzle arises because, in appearance, actors seem to be asking questions, commanding, praying, and so on. But when Hamlet asks whether to be or not to be, the point is that he is not actually asking; for no question is actually uttered, though the utterance is expressing an interrogative *lekton*. Is this because the actor playing Hamlet, who utters the words, is not actually wondering about being or not being, nor is he actually looking for an answer?—the latter point is a component of what characterizes the interrogative *lekton*: namely that ‘it demands an answer’.⁴² Could Chrysippus here be

⁴¹ BARNES 1986 p.26 (2012a p.493): ‘the Logical Investigations are, after all, *zētēmata* (problems) and not *luseis* (solutions)’.

⁴² D.L. 7.66: ‘ἐρώτημα δέ ἐστι πρᾶγμα αὐτοτελές μὲν, ὥς καὶ τὸ ἀξίωμα, αἰτητικὸν δὲ ἀποκρίσεως’, ‘an interrogative is a thing complete in itself, like the *axiōma*, but demanding of an answer’.

rearticulating the Platonic conundrum about imitation and the pretention of the imitator to say something which is true, when in fact, because of what he is, the imitator is not, and will never be, in a position of saying something true?⁴³

Plato sets out the position of the imitator at an impossible distance from the Forms, and thus of truth ('imitation is at a considerable distance from truth', Plato *Rep.* 10, 598b5). As we have seen (3.3.2 above), *lekta* take on some aspects of the role the Forms have on the Platonic account. They are real, incorporeal items which are, sometimes, what is true. The question of access to the Forms, which is treated in book 10 of Plato's *Republic* in terms of the closeness to the Forms of the craftsman in contrast to the imitator, is now, with the Stoics, through the questions about the actor, set out in terms of degrees of appropriate expression of the *lekton*. Access to *lekta* is through language, and Chrysippus' puzzle about actors highlights the degrees of complexity involved in properly accessing a *lekton* (which consists in getting a *lekton* expressed). The span of the virtues of speech shows as much. Related to the requirements for properly expressing a *lekton* is one further question which Chrysippus' remark raises: for the puzzle also turns on the fact that there is no one actually saying anything when an actor speaks his lines: for it is (say) Hamlet who is asking whether to be or not to be, but in fact there is no such person, Hamlet, there, to say anything. It is Hamlet, however, who asks whether to be or not to be, and not the actor, though the actor is the person uttering the sentence. The question thus also touches on the status of fictional characters.

Fictional characters belong to a class of items which are figments of our thought (*phantasmata*), which might seem as though they are real ('quasi-somethings') but are not.⁴⁴ A *phantasma* is incapable of asking questions, commanding, or praying, or generally saying anything in the deep, structural understanding of saying which is involved in getting a *lekton* said. And indeed, a fictional character cannot even produce sound, that is to say, the corporeal phenomenon of projection of air (D.L. 7.55). The actor thus plays the role of the parrot (cf. 5.1.3.1 above) who utters, *prophēresthai*, significant sounds, but does not succeed in saying anything. And yet something more than mere parroting is taking place at the theatre, and this is what Chrysippus is drawing our attention to.

Chrysippus elsewhere goes to some length to account for questions of psychological failures and errors of judgement on the basis of a detailed

⁴³ Plato *Rep.* 10, 596e5: on the productions of the imitator which 'look as if they are real, but in fact are not real at all', 'φαινόμενα, οὐ μέντοι ὄντα γέ που τῇ ἀληθείᾳ'.

⁴⁴ D.L. 7.50, 61; Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900D–F: *phantasmata* are empty impressions distinguished from *phantasiai*, impressions triggered from real external impressors. Fictional characters, cf. Sen. *Ep.* 58.15, belong to the former class, and are therefore grouped with concepts (*ennoēmata*, see 3.2.4 above) as not-somethings, see BRUNSCHWIG 1988 pp.33–40, BAILEY 2014 p.293f.

analysis of a fictional character's words and deeds: from our sources, he focuses on Medea from Euripides' eponymous play.⁴⁵ Our aim here is neither to corner Chrysippus into contradiction (a sport sufficiently indulged in by many ancient authors, at the expense of the complexity of Chrysippus' original positions), nor to defend a Chrysippean comprehensive view about actors, or the role of fictional characters, which would need to be reconstructed.⁴⁶ Rather, Chrysippus helps us to highlight that all these underlying questions arise because of the Stoic understanding of saying—the understanding which is at the root of the notion of a *lekton*, and which is complex and committing. What it takes to get a *lekton* said marks out the specificity of saying, *legein*: for saying has, in-built in it, the conditions required for someone to actually get a specific *lekton* said. One thing which emerges from Chrysippus' puzzle, and which is consonant with our previous discussion, is that what is signified by a sentence (the *pragma* or *lekton*) is distinct from what expresses it. Only under certain conditions will an interrogative sentence properly express an interrogative *lekton*; only, that is, in a context in which a speaker wants to know something from someone (and requires an answer), will a question actually be a question. This is the dimension of the *prepon* (what is appropriate) as a virtue of speech, which it is the speaker's task to master in order to properly, i.e. actually, get a *lekton* said.

⁴⁵ Galen *PHP* 3.3.13–15 (306K) refers to Chrysippus' quoting Euripides 'having Medea say (*epoiēse legousan Mēdeian*)' that anger prevails over reason. I am not suggesting the formula 'Euripides has Medea say' is from Chrysippus (or thus alludes to a Stoic use of 'saying'), since Galen introduces a number of quotation in this way. But the formula attests to Galen's understanding Chrysippus as taking the words put into the character, Medea's, mouth, as expressive of a statement, which is to be endorsed and worthy of analysing as claiming something either true or false. Further down in the same text, *PHP* 3.4.28–33 (319K), Galen upbraids Chrysippus for forcing him, Galen, to waste time on these quotations from the poets and analyses of fictional characters such as Medea (which Galen calls 'chatter', '*adolescchia*') instead of producing proofs, *apodeixeis*. See GILL 1983 on Chrysippus' interpretation of Medea.

⁴⁶ Chrysippus, and the Stoics in general (cf. DE LACY 1948 for a panoramic view), are evidently interested in poetry, whether epic or tragedy, as is attested by the attention to Homer, with philological and philosophical interpretations: e.g. Chrysippus on solecism in *ΣHom. Il.* 1.129a1 (= *SVF* iii.769), on aspirations in *ΣHom. Il.* 13.41c (= *SVF* iii.773), on Achilles' overcoming his passion and teaching Priam about the healing power of reason commenting on *Hom. Il.* 24.549–51 in Galen *PHP* 4.6.40–2 (388K). On the last passage see CULLYER 2008, and generally on the Stoics on Homer see LONG 1996d. Chrysippus devotes several works to poetry, in particular two books *On How One Should Read Poems*, *Περὶ τοῦ πῶς δεῖ τῶν ποιημάτων ἀκούειν* (D.L. 7.200), which, judging by the content of a similarly titled essay by Plutarch, *Quomodo...*, and in line with the double interest (linguistic and symbolic) found in the known fragments, might have discussed both the distance one should take from the deeds described, and an appreciation of how the meaning of words is constructed by the relation between them, as is suggested by Plutarch's mentioning of Chrysippus in *Quomodo* 31E, discussing what 'wide-seeing' ('*europa*') means when qualifying Cronos, namely, according to Chrysippus, 'an expert in conversation, because Cronos has made huge strides in his capacity for speech', 'εὐρύσπα Κρονίδην εἶναι τὸν δεινὸν ἐν τῷ διαλέγεσθαι καὶ διαβεβηκότα τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ λόγου'.

The conditions of speech which enable a speaker to actually say something are thus accounted for by the virtues of speech, in which context and clarity are the measure. But these requirements are not similar, and cannot be assimilated to the transformative or performative dimensions of speech with which the speech acts theorists endow language. For the twentieth-century theorists, given the right conditions, speech transforms situations (typical examples being the priest declaring two people married, or the judge declaring their divorce). For the Stoics, these contexts merely enable a *lekton* to actually be said, given that what is transformative of a situation is already contained within the *lekton*, whether it is actually said or not. Thus speech, successfully communicative of a *lekton*, does not itself add anything which is not already there to be said. It is thus not speech which alters or contributes to the state-of-affairs which is the case at the present moment; it is a voicing of what is there to be said.

Context is crucial on the Stoic account, just as it is on the contemporary account, for the successful performance of what we may call, with the moderns, speech acts. However, unlike the moderns, and unlike Aristotle, the role the context of utterance plays, for the Stoics, is that of communicating what is already there to be signified within the *lekton*. For the contemporary speech act theory, but also for Aristotle, part of what it is to speak, to express something, is to produce meaning. This is why performativity is so important for Austin and the subsequent tradition he instigates, because it is the very act of speaking by which something gets done, namely what is expressed (e.g. 'you're fired!', or 'I hereby de-sanctify this church'). But performative speech is fragile, since it depends on linguistic conventions. Events come about, or not, because of who speaks, what they say, and what the interlocutor understands. For the Stoics, it is not speech which is responsible for this.

Speaker and interlocutor play at best a testimonial role, bearing witness to the state-of-affairs being or not being the case, and sometimes being involved in them. In bearing witness, they fulfil the tasks set out by the virtues of speech. But these are distinct from the question of the status and nature of *lekta*. The real questions bear on ontology and the status of states-of-affairs. To go back to the example of the first line of the *Iliad*, there is an invocative *lekton* in which the Goddess is invoked to help tell the story of the wrath of Achilles. It is up to a proficient speaker to voice that *lekton*, who can potentially do so in different languages and using different expressions.⁴⁷ It also may be the case, following Chrysippus' suggestion, that no speaker, actor or bard, will succeed in properly expressing the *lekton* for only someone who actually communicates thus with the Goddess can. However, the poetic tradition of which

⁴⁷ As LORD 1960 p.125 emphasizes, the Homeric tradition is founded on what he calls 'multiformity' of expression; neither bard nor audience expect fixed exactly repeated phrases. On translation see 8.1.3.5.1 below.

Homer is, for us, but an exemplary vestige, counted on the bard (who is not an actor) actually being on such terms with the inspirational Muse.⁴⁸

With the Stoic account of *lekta*, the actual expression of the *lekton* is distinct from the *lekton*. Thus both Aristotle and Protagoras' concerns are displaced. For we return, and find once more, the same response to the Sextan critique (cf. 5.1.3.2 above), namely that it is not the juxtaposition of words which constructs piecemeal a *lekton*. Rather, a *lekton*, here the *lekton* expressed by the first line of the *Iliad*, is a unified item. True enough, it takes a specific string of words to express it, but that *lekton* is not dependent for its subsistence on this linguistic construction.

6.2.5. *Lekta*, Can't Live With Them, Can't Live Without Them

The speech act theorists are, to all intents and purposes, pursuing the line of investigation broached by Protagoras. There are things which can be said, things there to be said, and things which are said, and they are all dependent on language; they are products of language. But when the Stoics claim that the things there to be said, and also the things which are said, do not primarily belong to language, but are items independent of language, they are not thinking of language as productive of meaning. Rather, language is the expression of states-of-affairs in reality. Language does not manufacture meaning, or provide a context for meaning, but is a messenger capable of seizing items which structure reality by expressing them according to internal laws governing the expression. It takes a right combination of words in the right context to express items with a distinct ontological status.

The Stoic claim triggers a reshuffling of the components of reality. This reshuffling is unacceptable to rival schools, firstly because it does not fit their own ontological frameworks, and secondly because it alters profoundly the place and role of language, which has immediate repercussions on the place and role of man and rationality. For if language is not a constructive instrument of our reason,⁴⁹ but a reflection derivative on a pre-established rational structure, then

⁴⁸ See SVENBRO 1976 pp.11–45. The role of the bard, however, changes once the Homeric text is fixed: *ibid.* pp.93–107 on the pivotal role of Xenophanes as establishing an insurmountable distance between the human bard-poet and his alleged inspiring Muse, which paves the way for, e.g., the Chrysippean question about the credibility of performers.

⁴⁹ It is Plato, *Crat.* 387a1–390d7, who, speaking of language as one kind of human activity (a *praxis*, as noted in 5.1.3 n.15 above) alongside weaving, cutting, lighting fires, ship-building, and so on, says that its 'instrument' (*organon*) is the correct attribution of names. This instrument can only properly be wielded by the dialectician, the person 'who knows how to distinguish between things and ask what each thing is' (*Crat.* 390c10–11). This grounding account of language as the 'natural instrument' (*Crat.* 389d4–8) produced under the supervision of the expert logician is a foundational moment before the two views about the correctness of names (by nature, as defended by Cratylus in *Crat.* 383a–384c, by convention, as defended by

man is no longer the crowning element of the world, which he can dominate, but merely an integral part of the structure. The specificity of man, compared to other beings, is then that he can express that structure through language, where other beings merely partake in actualizing its various states.

The stakes, in other words, are high. We have already discussed some of the specifically Stoic considerations about reason and rationality, through the relation of our minds (naturally bound to become fully rational) to the all-pervasive rationality of the cosmos (see 4.3 above). It is now time to examine the Stoics' proof for this cosmic rationale, through the proof of the reality of *lekta*. Since a great many of the sources at our disposal are polemical texts which take the Stoic theory to task, we shall look at them first, examining the reasons for the rejection of *lekta* by the rival schools of thought. Two main lines of refutation emerge: the first consists in denying the distinctness of *lekta* from already established items involved in language and thought processes, the second consists in considering *lekta* as unnecessary in an already saturated world. The first line of attack belongs roughly to the Platonic and Peripatetic perspective in the debate. The Stoic claims about the distinct status of *lekta* are rejected as surface distinctions, which do not alter the fundamentally Aristotelian schema. Critiques in the texts oscillate from the refusal to acknowledge any independence of *lekta* from utterances, to the refusal to acknowledge an independence of *lekta* from thought. The second line of discussion is constituted by the Epicurean denial of the presence of *lekta* in the world.⁵⁰ This discussion acknowledges the Stoic claims and attacks them on the grounds of their great difference from the Epicurean view. The difference here, with the Peripatetics, is that the Stoic account is properly recognized and not summarily put down as redundant.

In examining the views put against the Stoics, first by the Peripatetics, then by the Epicureans, the specificity of the Stoic account of reality as inclusive of, and co-constituted by, *lekta* will become ever more definite.

6.3. PERIPATETIC PERPLEXITIES

6.3.1. Ammonius: Traditional Peripatetic Semantics

We have already considered the criticism raised against the Stoics that *lekta* are not distinct from utterances. A passage which testifies to the perplexity

Hermogenes in *Crat.* 384c–386e) are assessed anew by Socrates in *Crat.* 391b–394e; see ADEMOLLO 2011 p.147 with pp.114–15, suggesting that Aristotle *Int.* 4, 16b33–17a2 on speech as instrumental (*organon*) or conventional, and opting for the latter, is perhaps a direct critique of Plato in this *Cratylus* passage.

⁵⁰ Cf. S.E. *PH* 2.107 and *M.* 8.258.

caused by the Stoic introduction of *lekta* is found in Ammonius' commentary on Aristotle's *De Interpretatione*, which stands at the crossroads of what can be called a tradition of misinterpretation:

Aristotle first teaches us, in these lines [referring to *Int.* 1, 16a3–9], what is principally and directly signified by them [names and verbs]; namely thoughts, and through these as intermediaries, things. And there is nothing else to consider in addition to these, which would come between the thought and the thing, precisely that which the Stoics thought fit to posit and call a *lekton*.⁵¹

In this passage Ammonius takes the Stoics to have placed *lekta* as intermediaries between things (*pragmata*) and thoughts (*noēmata*). He presents Aristotle as having theorized a smooth correspondence between words and thoughts, which themselves directly indicate things. Thoughts here play a mediating role. Aristotle, in the lines Ammonius comments on from *Int.* 1, 16a3–9, speaks first of '*pathēmata tēs psuchēs*', 'affections of the soul' (16a3–4). Then, a few lines down, these are referred to as 'thoughts' ('*noēmata*'), which are 'in the soul' ('*en tēi psuchēi*') (16a9–10). A thought, taken separately, has a relation of correspondence or similarity ('*eoike*') to a name or a verb,⁵² whereas the affections of the soul are said to be 'likenesses' ('*homoiōmata*') of things (*pragmata*) (16a7). In Ammonius' reconstruction, the notion of a likeness is interpreted as that of a mediation: thus thoughts, *noēmata*, mediate between words and things such that words signify things through thoughts.⁵³ Names and verbs, which are the only significant kinds of words,⁵⁴ directly signify thoughts, and indirectly things. Thoughts are the go-between.

The account Ammonius gives of the basic Aristotelian picture emphasizes more explicitly certain aspects which, in the original Aristotelian account, do not seem fixed in such precise terms. Ammonius emphasizes the directness of reference of words to their corresponding thoughts, the 'principal and direct' relation of signification, and the fluidity with which thoughts lead to things. This fluid correspondence from thought to thing is not a main point of emphasis in the Aristotelian text. But it plays a key role in the contrast

⁵¹ Amm. in *de Int.* 17.24–8: 'πρότερον ἡμᾶς ὁ Ἀριστοτέλης διδάσκει διὰ τούτων, τίνα ἔστι τὰ προηγουμένως καὶ προσεχῶς ὑπ' αὐτῶν σημαίνόμενα, καὶ ὅτι τὰ νοήματα, διὰ δὲ τούτων μέσων τὰ πράγματα, καὶ οὐδὲν ἕτερον δεῖ παρὰ ταῦτα ἐπινοεῖν μέσον τοῦ τε νοήματος καὶ τοῦ πράγματος, ὅπερ οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στωᾶς ὑποτιθέμενοι λεκτὸν ἡξίου ὀνομάζειν'.

⁵² Arist. *Int.* 1, 16a13–14: 'τὰ μὲν οὖν ὀνόματα αὐτὰ καὶ τὰ ῥήματα ἔοικε τῷ ἄνευ συνθέσεως καὶ διαρρέσεως νοήματι', 'names and verbs, by themselves, are like thoughts that are without combination and separation'.

⁵³ On Ammonius' re-interpretation see WHITAKER 1996 p.22.

⁵⁴ Amm. in *de Int.* 17.23–4: 'διαφέρουσι τὰ ὀνόματα καὶ τὰ ῥήματα τῶν ἀσήμων φωνῶν κατὰ τὸ σημαντικῶς τινων εἶναι', 'names and verb differ from meaningless sounds in that they signify something'. That only names and verbs are '*sēmantika*' is a view rehearsed throughout the Peripatetic tradition, presumably originating with the Platonic account in the *Sophist* where name and verb are analysed as the two signifying elements of a sentence. This is a view developed by Theophrastus and Porphyry; see more at 9.1.6 below.

Ammonius builds with the Stoics, anticipating the rejection of the Stoic view. For rather than questioning the centrality of the role of an individual's mind and thoughts in the linguistic process, Ammonius focuses on the solidity of the correspondences that govern the Aristotelian schema for it. There are no chinks, and no room to insert something additional in between words, thoughts, and things. The Stoics are presented as attempting to break apart this compact triad. The mention of the Stoics is brief and almost anecdotal. It serves to reinforce the validity of the proposed Aristotelian model. And this is much at the expense of the Stoic theory of *lekta*. For Ammonius, the Stoics intercalate a superfluous intermediary into the solid Aristotelian schema. Ammonius does not, in other words, treat the introduction of *lekta* as offering a completely different schema (which is, in effect, what the Stoics do).

Ammonius' presentation is revealing as to the attitude taken up by a tradition of rejection of the notion of a *lekton*: *lekta* do not fit in the general schema of significant speech, established on a certain interpretation of a basic Platonic and Aristotelian model. The core of that interpretative tradition is that it roots language to thoughts, thus consolidating the relation between a word and a thought.⁵⁵ Language is thus the crowning capacity of human beings as it fulfils our capacity for knowledge.⁵⁶ From this perspective, the redundant intercalation of *lekta* into the schema is, in any case, taken merely to overburden the word-to-thought correspondence with, now, a word-to-*lekton*-to-thought correlation. The tradition Ammonius represents is committed to the central role of thought such that it is the association of thoughts which determines an association of words. The association of thoughts refers to a relation between things, e.g. Socrates and illness. The linguistic process serves to signify these things thanks to the logical tool of predication. Crucially, however, predication itself has no ontological correspondence outside language. It is merely the way we express the association our thoughts make with reference to an association of things (a substance and a property). Language expresses thoughts; it has a direct correspondence with thoughts. It is only indirectly associated with external things by virtue of the relation of thoughts to

⁵⁵ This basic Peripatetic schema is pedagogically recounted by Dexippus in *Cat.* 6.31–10.32, explaining that the Peripatetic tradition has merely made more explicit what the 'ancients' ('*archaioi*') meant when saying that 'only thoughts (*noēmata*) are signified by words', because it is understood that 'thoughts are about and derived from the things (*peri tōn pragmatōn kai apo tōn pragmatōn*), therefore in a secondary sense, the things are also signified' (*in Cat.* 9.22–5). Simplicius in *Cat.* 41.28–9 refers this Peripatetic creed to Boethus, who himself refers back to 'the ancients'. DILLON 2014 p.28 n.16 conjectures Porphyry, *via* Iamblichus, as the common source. See LOYD 1998 pp.37–41.

⁵⁶ Thus Ammonius explains that Aristotle identifies assertoric sentences as the subject of 'interpretation' (*hermēneia*), justifying thereby the title of the work, because these sentences 'can interpret the knowledge of the soul' (*Amm. in de Int.* 5.17–19), where 'interpret' is further glossed as expounding or announcing (for '*exangelitikon*') the 'knowledge which arises within us' (*in de Int.* 5.15).

things. By framing *lekta* as part of the linguistic process, Ammonius casts *lekta* as doubling up on the role thoughts play with respect to words. It follows that *lekta* are indeed redundant, since they are not acknowledged any mind-independence.

It is the main bone of contention between the Stoics and the Peripatetics that, for the Peripatetics, there is nothing in the extra-mental reality apart from substances, or things, and properties whose characteristics are that they are predicated of a substance. Indeed, it is one of the most fertile contentions we have in our extant sources, because it distinctly sets up the two contrasting views, thus confirming that for the Stoics, *contra mundum peripateticum*, *lekta* are mind-independent.⁵⁷ Language is the tool by which that predicative relation can be expressed in different ways, but what is thereby expressed is in no way additional, in reality, to the two things identified from the start. From the Peripatetic perspective, the Stoics' talk of *lekta* must belong to the side of the linguistic process, and cannot be assimilated to the mind-independent things, which are called '*pragmata*'. We must therefore be wary of associating the *pragmata* Ammonius is speaking of here with the talk of *pragmata* we have seen to be important for the Stoics. For the Stoics are shown to introduce the term '*lekton*' precisely in order to specify the nature of the 'thing' ('*pragma*'), which gets said when we utter complete sentences (see 5.1.3 above). It is a confusion which is easily made, given the utter indeterminacy of the word 'thing' in Greek as in English. But in the contexts we are interested in it is a delicate question, one which betrays more than mere confusion of usages, but rather an awareness (however hazy), in at least some authors, of the kind of questions the Stoics are concerned with.

6.3.2. Simplicius, *On the Categories*: the Stoic Influence

There are echoes of Stoic doctrine discernible within the Peripatetic tradition. This is visible in a passage from Simplicius' commentary on Aristotle's *Categories* 10 on opposites. Simplicius comments on Aristotle's use of the word '*pragma*' in *Cat.* 10, 12b15, where sentences, here '*logoi*' (affirmations or negations), are distinguished from 'what underlies them'. Aristotle moves from talking of 'what underlies the affirmation or negation' ('*to hupo tēn kataphasin ē tēn apophasin*', *Cat.* 12b9–10) to 'the thing (*pragma*) underlying each of the two kinds of sentences' (*Cat.* 12b15). What Aristotle is concerned with is to establish an analogy between two levels of opposites: the sentence-level and the level 'underlying the sentence'. He concludes that just as an

⁵⁷ The polemic is referred to in Sen. *Ep.* 117.11, in S.E. *PH* 3.14, and in Clement *Strom.* 8.9.26.4. See chapter 7 below.

affirmative sentence is opposed to a negative sentence, in the same way what underlies the affirmation is opposed to what underlies the negation.⁵⁸ Two main strands of interpretation divide the scholarly literature on this aside from Aristotle: one discussion turns on whether by '*pragma*' Aristotle is implying that there are states-of-affairs distinct from substances;⁵⁹ in another strand of interpretation Aristotle is thinking of an alteration of the constituents of the predicative relation when the predicated property is a negative (e.g. 'not sitting') compared to a positive ('sitting').⁶⁰ These two strands originate in the ancient reception of the text, which, as we shall see with Simplicius, is stimulated by Stoic elements of doctrine concerning *pragmata*. In his commentary, Simplicius attempts to lay out the ambiguity in what Aristotle is indicating, by appealing to Stoic notions:

for indeed the thing which is revealed from under the affirmation is not an affirmation, and that which is revealed from under the negation is not a negation. If indeed, the affirmation and the negation are sentences, then those things which are signified (*ta sēmainomena*) by them are not sentences.⁶¹

Simplicius brings in Stoic terminology to explain the questions raised by the notion of a *pragma* in its relation to the expression of complete sentences: the recognizably Stoic use of 'things signified' (*sēmainomena*), and the assumption that the single *pragma* 'is revealed' (*dēlounenon*) which shows that Simplicius is already taking for granted that a whole sentence reveals a single thing distinct from it. These are the debates broached by the Stoics and not present in Aristotle. The lines from Aristotle which generate this discussion are a seemingly parenthetical remark, for the passage in Aristotle more generally concerns the nature of privation, and not semantics.⁶² But the commentary generated by Aristotle's aside on the *pragma* underlying the sentence reveals the influence of the debates about these questions, which—given the presence of Stoic terminology—involve the Stoic theory of the reality of *lekta*. And

⁵⁸ Arist. *Cat.* 10, 12b12–6: 'ὥς γάρ ποτε ἡ κατάφασις πρὸς τὴν ἀπόφασιν ἀντίκειται, οἷον τὸ κάθηται—οὐ κάθηται, οὕτω καὶ τὸ ὑφ' ἑκάτερον πρᾶγμα ἀντίκειται, τὸ καθῆσθαι—μὴ καθῆσθαι', 'Just as the affirmation is opposed to the negation, e.g. "he sits" is opposed to "he is not sitting", so the underlying thing, sitting, is opposed to not sitting'.

⁵⁹ Thus DE RIJK 1987 stands by an interpretation of Aristotle as speaking here of states-of-affairs, suggesting that Aristotle then changes his view in the *Metaphysics*, where states-of-affairs are only positive or affirmative; Socrates is not sitting, then, would no longer count as a *pragma* in the sense Aristotle seems to consider in the *Categories*. See also CRIVELLI 2004 pp.46–62 on this 'later development' view.

⁶⁰ See OEHLER 2006 p.328, with previous comments on *Cat.* 5, 4a344b1, esp. p.272 tying Aristotle back to Plato *Soph.* 263a4ff.

⁶¹ Simplicius in *Cat.* 397.1–4: 'καὶ γὰρ τὸ πρᾶγμα τὸ ὑπὸ τῆς καταφάσεως δηλούμενον οὐκ ἔστιν κατάφασις, καὶ τὸ ὑπὸ τῆς ἀποφάσεως οὐκ ἔστιν ἀπόφασις, εἴπερ λόγοι μὲν ἢ κατάφασις καὶ ἀπόφασις, οὐ λόγοι δὲ τὰ ὑπ' αὐτῶν σημαινόμενα.'

⁶² In the OCT edition by MINIO-PALUELLO 1949 these lines are indeed put in parenthesis.

indeed, a couple of lines after the above quotation, Simplicius sets out the possible answers to the question of what this *pragma* is:

When I say that Socrates sits, that is a sentence made up of a name and a verb, but that is something different from the thing itself. Thus, whether statements consist in words or in thought-contents or in the incorporeal subsisting *lekta*, they are distinct from the qualified bodies.⁶³

The question about the underlying *pragma* has now become the question of what gets said when we say something, which must perforce be different from the grammatical constituents of a sentence. Moreover, whatever the answer is, Simplicius says it must stand in contrast to a ‘qualified body’—a vocabulary and a perspective of analysis which is derived from Stoic logic and physics. The Stoic presence is all the more clear with the three options Simplicius gives us for what *pragmata* are: words or thoughts or *lekta*. The first thing to note, in comparison to Ammonius above, is that the disjunction is taken seriously, that is, that the possibility that the underlying *pragmata* might be *lekta* is a serious possibility, i.e. they are not taken to be the same as either words or thoughts. The second important feature is that the terminology reflects post-Aristotelian debates rather than a conservative recourse to Aristotelian terms: the use of ‘*dianoēmata*’ for ‘thought-contents’ rather than ‘*dianoēseis*’ for thoughts is an additional example. True enough, Simplicius will conclude the discussion, in conformity with the Peripatetic line, that what are signified by words are ‘rational thoughts’ (‘*logikai dianoēseis*’) which can admit of opposition in the same way as affirmative and negative sentences are opposed (*in Cat.* 397.22–4). The formula itself of ‘rational thoughts’ appears as an interpretation of the introduction of ‘thought-content’ and continues to unfold echoes of Stoic terminology and perspective: namely the Stoic distinction between rational impressions, called ‘thoughts’ (*noēseis*), and irrational impressions, which have no other name (D.L. 7.51).

All these terminological and notional markers are indications that Simplicius is aware of the specificity of the Stoic contribution and, what is more, that whichever of the candidates for the underlying *pragma* one opts for has consequences for one’s ontological view, since the contrast is brought down to a question of ontology: what is it that contrasts with a qualified body? By speaking of ‘qualified bodies’, Simplicius opens up a path of inquiry which is not present in the Aristotelian or Peripatetic account, namely what is a body, and in what way is a body (not a subject, or a substance) related to its qualified state. This is not to claim that Simplicius is adopting, or adapting, Stoic

⁶³ Simplicius *in Cat.* 397.10–12: ‘ὁ δὲ λόγος ὁ λέγων ὅτι Σωκράτης κάθηται, ἐξ ὀνόματος <καὶ ῥήματος> συγκείμενος, ἕτερός ἐστιν αὐτοῦ τοῦ πράγματος, εἴτε οὖν ἐν φωναῖς εἴτε ἐν τοῖς διανοήμασιν εἴτε ἐν τοῖς παρφυσισταμένοις ἀσωμάτοις λεκτοῖς αἱ προτάσεις ὑφ’ ἐσθήκασιν, διεσθήκασιν αὐταὶ τῶν ποιῶν σωμάτων.’

doctrine. He goes on to explain the distinction between a body, such as the body Socrates (which, for the Stoics, would be a good example of a qualified body,⁶⁴ but which Simplicius equates with an unqualified body), and a body ‘with respect to an activity’ (*kata tēn energeian*), i.e. a body doing something (e.g. sitting or not sitting). He thus redirects the discussion towards more familiar Aristotelian territory, considering activity as one of the categories and thus as a predicable property. Simplicius thus end up with the notion of ‘body with respect to an activity’, a somewhat monstrous Stoic—Aristotelian hybrid.

Richard Gaskin (1998) has analysed in great detail the overload of Stoic terminology in these lines by Simplicius. He considers first the possibility that Simplicius truly makes room for a distinct Stoic view. For that, he claims (pp.54–8), we cannot take at face value that there are three options for statements in the passage quoted above (words/thoughts/*lekta*), but we must assume that Simplicius has in mind the association of *lekta* with thought-contents (*dianoēmata*). This is probably correct if we are indeed trying to identify an authentic Stoic basis to the passage, since *lekta* correspond to the contents of thoughts (see 2.2.6 above), and it is likely that Simplicius would have known of texts confirming the relation of thought to *lekta*—as we do in our own extant sources.⁶⁵ However, it is noteworthy that Simplicius adds the qualification of ‘subsisting alongside’ (*paruphistamenois*) when he lists *lekta*. Since he uses in the same sentence the root verb ‘*huphestēkasi*’, he seems to be making an empathic distinction with the addition of the prefix, marking out ‘subsisting alongside’ as a specific Stoic usage (as discussed at 3.3.3 above). If Simplicius is indeed being particularly careful about his choice of terms, this would rather indicate that he means to distinguish the contents of thought from the *lekta*—a distinction which then would place mental items on one side and mind-independent items (i.e. the *lekta*) on the other. Since Simplicius does not go into any detail in this regard, both Gaskin’s suggestions and my own remain highly speculative.

Gaskin’s concern is to identify an alternative schema to the Peripatetics, which Simplicius would have hinted at, only to mould it back into a Peripatetic-compatible format. The alternative semantic schema would consist in distinguishing linguistic items from external things and from *lekta*, understood here as thought-contents. The *lekta* would thus play a role akin to that of senses in the Fregean use, as opposed to reference. Simplicius would thereby be merely continuing the tradition of taking the Stoics to have introduced *lekta* as mind-dependent entities. The contribution envisaged—which would also constitute the resolution of a certain ambiguity in Aristotle—would be that

⁶⁴ E.g. Ps-Galen *Qual. Inc.* 464.1–3; Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1085E.

⁶⁵ Simplicius himself in *Cat.* 10.3 recalls the Peripatetic reconversions, saying that for Aristotle thoughts are said (*legomena*) and sayable (*lekta*) ‘as even the Stoics agree’, in which Simplicius associates the Stoic notion of a *lekton* with an adjectival use.

there is a shareable and communicable content, in other words an objective content of thoughts, distinct from the personal and subjective production of thoughts. Sentences would then signify that content.⁶⁶ Gaskin then shows that, because for Simplicius there is no real distinction between the content of the thought and the thought itself, Simplicius can easily slip from talking of *dianoēmata* to *dianoēseis*. In this way, Simplicius can conclude by justifying the Peripatetic view that sentences signify thoughts.

The heart of the discussion Gaskin unfolds turns on the explanation of the underlying *pragma*. For if Simplicius is indeed ingesting Stoic doctrine, then what he is describing as that which is signified by a sentence is a complex content, which is a *pragma* in the Stoic sense. Gaskin, I take it, implies that Simplicius himself might have been prompted to launch into a discussion about *lekta* because of the presence of the term '*pragma*' in the text. That Simplicius further feels the need to clarify that the external object is not a body *simpliciter*, like Socrates, but a body 'with respect to an activity', is a further indication, for Gaskin, that Simplicius is aware that the Stoics would speak of Socrates as an external body, given that a *lekton* obtains, i.e. holds true with respect to a body (on which see chapter 8). In that light Simplicius, mindful of keeping to the Aristotelian position, corrects what only a Stoically-aware reader might have questioned, when Simplicius first speaks of the contrast between statements and the external things, as qualified bodies.

6.3.3. A Certain *Esprit d'Ouverture*, Within Bounds

Simplicius' explanation of a qualified body in terms of the agent in relation to his activity is the main theme of discussion of Simplicius' previous comments on Aristotle's *Categories* 9 on the category of action. Simplicius distinguishes between the agent, who 'includes' ('*sumperilambanei*') both the subject ('*hupokeimenon*'), who is doing the activity ('*energoun*') and the activity ('*energeia*') (in *Cat.* 301.29–30). This is important, as Simplicius thus firmly establishes that he is talking of subjects in the Peripatetic tradition. Gaskin himself ends up acknowledging that the Stoic reading of these lines in

⁶⁶ On this view of the Stoics as 'correcting' an ambiguity in Aristotle's semantics where thoughts seem exclusively subjective see WEIDEMAN 1993. Because of his interpretation of Stoic *lekta* as mind-dependent, LONG 1971b p.80 takes these lines in Simplicius to properly sketch out a Stoic semantic model, distinct from the Aristotelians. Long does not however provide an explanation of the following lines which seem to conflate thought-contents with thoughts and thus bring back to the Peripatetic fold the semblances of a departure from the traditional theory. This does not in itself invalidate the mind-dependent interpretation of *lekta*, but it does cast some doubts as to its being faithfully evoked by Simplicius, since the latter seems intent on assimilating *lekta* to the Peripatetic view, rather than highlighting parallels between two different views.

Simplicius cannot hold without taking on board a host of misrepresentations of the Stoics and loading the text with a series of assumptions about what Simplicius might have had in mind. Gaskin offers a second reading, which vindicates a straightforward Peripatetic line, in which—just as in the Ammonius passage quoted above in 6.3.1—the Stoics are referenced as contributors to this debate, but without any great accuracy as to what they in fact contribute. The *lekta*, which get mentioned, are in any case put on the side of speech production originating from the mind, and not on the side of things in reality.

Compared to the brief mention of *lekta* in the Ammonius passage above, Simplicius acknowledges that there is a choice between *lekta* and thoughts: it is either/or, which is something Ammonius does not envisage. Thus, though Simplicius fails to account for *lekta* in any precise way, he attests to the awareness that the presence of *lekta* would completely modify the set-configuration.

Though Simplicius does not ultimately give us any positive indication about *lekta*, it is worthwhile bringing out his testimony because it dispels two commonly held opinions about the influence of the Stoics, or lack of it. For one, the Stoics have a distinct, though (perhaps too) complicated contribution in the discussion about semantics; their supposedly technical vocabulary is thus not merely name-dropped out of antiquarian snobbery.⁶⁷ Secondly, the Peripatetic semantic theory is not taken for granted by its guardians. It is constantly questioned by bringing in, however distortedly, rival theories. The task of the commentator is to tackle these rival theories by successfully tying them into the dominant account. In this way the Peripatetic account is universally validated, since what seems on the surface to challenge it is shown to be brought round to it. This ever renewed need to prove the theory right is an indication of the programmatic aspect of Peripatetic commentary, that of aspiring to an across-the-board consensual agreement.⁶⁸

The terminological overload in these lines shows that the Stoics are acknowledged and ingested into the discussion on these questions. Simplicius, who some pages earlier laments having so few texts left from the Stoics (*in Cat.* 334.1–3), reveals at the same time his awareness of the importance of the Stoic contribution to logic and metaphysics.⁶⁹ Misrepresentations, which turn on imprecise and confused usages of terms, are thus nevertheless enlightening as

⁶⁷ As suggested by LOYD 1998 p.19.

⁶⁸ Particularly perhaps in the case of Simplicius, whose pursuit of the Peripatetic ambition of unifying all of philosophy (and thus, recruiting all schools around a common goal) is exacerbated by the need to present a unified philosophical front against the Christians, see BALTUSSEN 2008 *esp.* epilogue pp.201–9.

⁶⁹ It is, after all, Simplicius who is the author of the only commentary on a Stoic text to have reached us, namely his commentary on Epictetus' *Enchiridion*. Though the focus there is on ethics, and as I. HADOT 2001 has shown in her introduction to the text and translation, the Stoic elements are in effect trampolines for the development of an idiosyncratic and eclectic ethics.

to the level of seriousness of the debate on the questions raised by the reality of *lekta* by the Stoics. For, though too quick and awkward, Simplicius testifies to the concern, which originates with the Stoics, with how to identify the thing in reality to which the complex syntax of a complete sentence corresponds. The answer the Stoics had brought was to postulate the reality of *lekta*. Simplicius attests to the rejection of that theory, but also to the lost innocence of the Peripatetic tradition. For, once having rejected *lekta*, the Peripatetics cannot pretend there is no problem there and leave hanging claims about propositions which in hindsight are ambiguous in Aristotle. Gaskin evokes a notion developed by the medieval Scholastics, namely that of a '*complexe significabile*' theorized by Gregory of Rimini.⁷⁰ This is one of the distant answers developed within the Peripatetic tradition through discussions of elements of Stoic doctrine, however much they might be Aristotelized.⁷¹

The key element in the Peripatetic account of meaningful speech is the direct relation between words and thoughts. For this reason, they cannot admit of a third element outside the mind and yet distinct from the subject. Hence the perplexities encountered in the various passages where the notion of a *lekton* is recorded, oscillating between an identification with words and an identification with thoughts. There is thus a series of texts which present *lekta* as the equivalents of expressions or words:

The Stoics, who tend to make innovations, call things (*pragmata*) '*tunchanonta*' (that which obtains), because we want to obtain things, whereas they call thoughts (*noēmata*) '*ekphorika*' (enunciated), because we utter out loud what we think in our minds, and they call words '*lekta*'.⁷²

The same triptych, things (*pragmata*), thoughts (*noēmata*), words (*phōnai*), constitutes the reference grid with which the Stoic notions are compared, and

⁷⁰ Gregory himself, with the *complexe significabile*, is pursuing a line of thought which can be traced to Abelard's theory of '*dictum*', the meaningful content of a sentence (cf. MARENBO 1997 pp.204–10 with references), and the '*enuntiabile*' discussed in the anonymous *Ars Burana* (p.208f. in DE RIJK 1967), which presumably derive from Augustine, who, e.g. at *Dial.* 5, transcribes what, to all intents and purposes, is the core Stoic description of the *lekton*: 'Quidquid autem ex verbo non aures sed animus sentit et ipso animo tenetur inclusum, "dicibile" vocatur', which translates as: 'whatever that thing is which comes from speech, which is not perceived by the ears, but understood by the mind itself and is held there, enclosed, is called a "dicibile"'. See on this lineage NUCHELMANS 2008; on the Stoic influence in scholasticism see EBBESEN 2004.

⁷¹ This does not happen by openly acknowledging the Stoics, but by a silent ingestion as exemplified by the quoted passage from Augustine in the previous note. Passages such as the one studied here by Simplicius provide the vocabulary for this process of anonymized adoption. Boethius also plays a role in this ingestion and transmission to medieval scholastics of elements of Stoic logic, in particular by reinvesting familiar descriptions and definitions of the *lekton*, as retraced in KRETZMANN 1970 esp. pp.771–8.

⁷² Themistius in *An. Pr.* 92.1–3: 'οἱ δὲ Στωϊκοὶ καινότεραν βαδίζοντες τὰ μὲν πράγματα τυγχάνοντα ὠνόμασαν, διότι τῶν πραγμάτων τυχεῖν βουλόμεθα, τὰ δὲ νοήματα ἐκφορικά, διότι, ἅπερ ἐν αὐτοῖς νοοῦμεν, ταῦτα εἰς τὸ ἔξω προφέρομεν, τὰς δὲ φωνὰς λεκτά'. This comparative grid appears almost verbatim in other commentators (cf. 5.1.2 with n.8 above).

to which they are reduced. We find '*pragmata*' once more, but this time not in the problematized position which Simplicius develops, i.e. as that which is signified by a sentence. Here, the things are the external objects (on which more at 8.1.3.1 below). There is a deliberate insistence on the oddity of the Stoic terms, with the suggestion, given that they are said to be in fact equivalent to the Aristotelian terms, that they are unnecessarily odd, and merely for the sake of 'innovation'. What comes out of these texts is that *lekta* do not fit into the Platonic/Aristotelian frame the commentators write in. The notion of a *lekton* is boxed into it and is thus misrepresented.⁷³ However, the more we see how *lekta* are misrepresented, the more certain we can be of the direction to take for a more faithful understanding of *lekta*.

6.4. THE EPICUREANS ON WHAT IS WRONG WITH *LEKTA*

6.4.1. Between Words and Things, No Place for *lekta*

How arbitrary is it to posit the subsistence of incorporeal *lekta*? According to S.E., very arbitrary:

and if they spontaneously declare that this incorporeal *lekton* obtains, then we can, just as spontaneously, declare that it does not.⁷⁴

In other words, S.E.'s complaint is that there is no proof of reality. In a different passage, the 'us' who retort to the Stoics find confirmation in their position, since there is no consensus about *lekta* among the dogmatist philosophers. Thus the Epicureans make a similar clear-cut rejection of *lekta*:

We firstly declare that it is not clear that there is such a thing as a *lekton*. For amongst the Dogmatists, the Epicureans say there is no such thing as a *lekton*, whereas the Stoics say there is.⁷⁵

If Epicurus himself could not have denied the reality of *lekta*, given that the notion of a *lekton* is developed at a time after his death,⁷⁶ what the doxography

⁷³ A similar conclusion in VERBEKE 1996 p.139.

⁷⁴ S.E. M. 8.76: 'καὶ εἰ μὲν αὐτόθεν λέγοιεν τὸ ἀσώματον τοῦτο λεκτὸν ὑπάρχειν, καὶ ἡμῖν ἐξέσται λέγειν αὐτόθεν ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν'.

⁷⁵ S.E. PH. 2.107: 'ἡμεῖς δὲ λέγομεν πρῶτον, ὅτι ἀδηλὸν ἔστιν, εἰ ἔστι <τι> λεκτόν. ἐπεὶ γὰρ τῶν δογματικῶν οἱ μὲν Ἐπικούρειοί φασι μὴ εἶναι <τι> λεκτόν, οἱ δὲ Στωϊκοὶ εἶναι'. On the Epicurean rejection of the reality of *lekta* see also S.E. 8.258; Plut. Adv. Col. 1119F.

⁷⁶ Cleanthes is the first Stoic philosopher to be credited with speaking of *lekta* (cf. Clement Strom. 9.26.4 at 7.1 and 8.2.2 below). He succeeded as head of the Stoic school after Zeno, whose death in 262 BC occurred eight years after Epicurus' own death in 270 BC. The notion in *nucleo*,

retains, through S.E. and Plutarch, are the opposing views of the two schools about what it is we say when we speak. For, differently from the Peripatetic commentators (who adapt the Stoic notion to their own schema by altering and misrepresenting the notion of a *lekton*), the Epicureans take into account a properly Stoic notion of a *lekton*, which they expressly reject. There is thus a great difference between the Epicurean and the Peripatetic reactions to *lekta*. The Peripatetics take the view that *lekta* must be like items which their own schema recognizes, either more like their thoughts, or more like their expressions. But this is not the Epicurean approach. The Epicureans explicitly reject *lekta*, ‘cancelling out completely the class of *lekta*’.⁷⁷ As such, in rejecting *lekta*, the Epicureans reject the items as the Stoics posit them: namely items, distinct from mental concepts and from bodies, which are incorporeal within a specific ontological framework, and which are what gets said when someone says something. They are not words, nor correlates of words.

In particular, the rejection of *lekta* by the Epicureans is based on a fundamental rejection of the way the Stoics understand ‘to say’, developed in relation to *lekta* (as examined in chapter 5). The Epicureans cannot admit of the possibility that there is an incorporeal thing there to be said through the utterance of a certain string of words. Rather, words pick out things. Predication, on this view, rather than expressing a real relation between different kinds of items, is merely one way of expressing the way a body is perceived from the point of view of its various properties: thus ‘Socrates is tanned’ or ‘Socrates is just’ are expressions describing the way Socrates is perceived from different points of view, namely of his complexion, or of his behaviour, and not expressions in which some property (for the Stoics, a corporeal quality) comes to be attributed to Socrates.⁷⁸

In our doxographical sources the comparison between Epicureans and Stoics is made in clearly Stoic terms. The very claim about the rejection of *lekta* by the Epicureans, for one, is already a contrast set up from the point of view of the Stoics. For even if there are Epicureans who explicitly criticize Stoic *lekta*, the Epicurean explanation of language does not resort in any way to *lekta* or comparable items. Thus it is only from the Stoic point of view that the rejection of *lekta* is pertinent, insofar as it highlights elements of Stoic doctrine. S.E. at *M.* 8.13 reports that for Epicurus there are only two (out of the Stoic three) items involved in the production of meaningful speech, namely ‘the signifier (*sēmainon*) and the external object (*tunchanon*)’. S.E. thus sets out whichever Epicurean theory he might be referring to in distinctly Stoic

however, of a mind-independent state-of-affairs is present in Zeno, who develops the notion of a *katēgorēma* (see chapter 7 below).

⁷⁷ Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1119F: ‘οἱ τὸ τῶν λεκτῶν γένος [...] ἄρδην ἀναιρεῖτε’.

⁷⁸ Thus Ep. *Her.* 68: ‘οὐθ’ ὡς καθ’ ἑαυτὰς εἰσι φύσεις δοξαστέον’, ‘these [the things which are predicated] must not be considered as existing as independent things’.

terms. For it is the Stoics who speak of *sēmainonta*, signifiers, and of the external object as a *tunchanon*. The terms the Epicureans are more likely to use are '*phthongoi*' for utterances and '*pragmata*' for the objects in reality.⁷⁹ When Plutarch attacks the Epicureans for rejecting *lekta*, though *lekta* 'provide substantial reality (*ousia*) to speech' (*Adv. Col.* 1119F), he too sets out the critique in Stoic terms. Plutarch explains that only two items are involved in the Epicurean account of language in contrast to the three of the Stoics. Plutarch speaks of 'words' (*phōnai*) and the *tunchanonta*, external objects. Plutarch himself is not defending the Stoic notion of a *lekton* in itself, but it is the Stoic notion which he refers to in order to bring out the contrast between a direct Epicurean two-tiered relation between words and things, which is 'ruinous to life', and a three-tiered theory such as the Stoic theory, which at least 'provides substantial reality to speech' thanks to *lekta*. It is not the first time Plutarch defends the Stoics against the Epicureans in the *Adversus Colotem*; the argumentative strategy there is that of saving the best from amongst the worst. For the Stoics are paired up with the Epicureans, as the 'newer' philosophers⁸⁰ who deny the existence of Platonic Form.⁸¹ But even the Stoics, says Plutarch, understand that some things must exist in a different way from the way bodies exist. That is why the Stoics say of *lekta*, along with place, time, and void, that they subsist (*huphestōsi*) and obtain, or are present, (*huparchousin*), and thus 'play a role in life and in philosophy' (*Adv. Col.* 1116B).

Without endorsing the Stoic theory, Plutarch defends the view rejected by the Epicureans, namely that there is a third element involved in the production of language, thanks to the reality of things other than bodies. The third element is distinct from words and the external, perceptible, things, but it is real enough to guarantee that what we say, in expressing it, is real. The weight of Plutarch's attacks is not on the technicalities of a semantic theory, but on a question of ontology: the 'highest and most important matter', namely what there is in reality. Plutarch's constant complaint throughout the work is that the Epicureans only consider what is perceptible as real. Thus, when it comes to discussing the topic of language and the production of meaningful speech,

⁷⁹ See *Ep. Her.* 37. On this see ASMIS 1984 p.27 and ATHERTON 2009 p.202. For the Stoic signature in the use of '*sēmainon*' see 2.2.1 above, and for '*tunchanon*' 8.1.3 below. See BARNES 1996a, rehabilitating a distinctly Epicurean account of reference (and apposite terminology), based on Epicurean preconceptions (*prolēpseis*).

⁸⁰ There is an ironic undertone in calling the Stoics and Epicureans 'the newer philosophers', suggesting that, though purporting to renew and innovate, they actually do not. It is a leitmotiv in Plutarch, and present in profusion amongst the Platonists and Peripatetics, as we glimpsed above in the extract from Themistius (n.72), who refers to the Stoics' 'innovations' ('*kainoteran badizontes*'). Typically, with Plutarch, as with Themistius, the point is that the supposed innovations come down to unnecessary complications in terminology: e.g. *Alex. in An. Pr.* 373.29–31; *Galen Inst. Log.* 3.4–5.

⁸¹ On the anti-Platonism of Epicurus see BLOCH 1993.

here too Plutarch highlights how the Epicurean reductive ontology impairs the possibility of a theory of language. What is more, the account the Epicureans come up with (only words and objects) denies the possibility of ever saying something true to reality, because there is no thing in their ontology, which accounts for what is signified when we speak. Again, in concession to the best of the worst, i.e. the Stoics, Plutarch expands on the scope of the damage by giving a list of the kind of rationality-displaying activities which the Epicureans cannot claim to account for. Plutarch mentions these activities in Stoic terms as they all involve *lekta*: learning (*mathēseis*), teaching (*didaskalia*), having preconceptions (*prolēpseis*), thoughts (*noēseis*), impulses (*hormai*), assenting (*sunkatatheseis*). What Plutarch is saying is that the Epicureans ‘are ruinous for life’ because they do not account for the reality of incorporeal things, by not allowing for something distinct from utterances to be there, to be said and to be thought.

Thus it is not that the Stoic incorporeals, as additionally present alongside bodies, are properly conceived—after all for Plutarch the Platonist, incorporeals, as he notes, should be the only true beings, whereas everything else is ‘in becoming’ (*Adv. Col.* 1116B).⁸² But still, their presence ‘saves life’, where their absence destroys it with the Epicureans. Plutarch’s remarks are polemical and mono-focal, but they get to the heart of the matter: (i) the question of *lekta* involves the broader question of the status of incorporeals, and not language, (ii) *lekta*, like the other three incorporeals, are real items in the world. The Epicureans understood points (i) and (ii), since their own account of language rejects the involvement of *lekta* precisely because their ontology does not make room for such additional items in ontology. The debate about *lekta* with the Epicureans is thus concentrated on the fundamental question about the status of incorporeality.

6.4.2. Ontological Status

The presence of the incorporeals in the Stoic cosmic *systema* is decisive. The grounding characteristic of the Stoic *systema* is its connective structure. This is the purport of the word ‘*systema*’ which the Stoics introduce, which, as discussed in 1.2 above, derives from the verb ‘*sunistanai*’ (literally, ‘to stand connected’), to capture their tight-knit account of reality. It is the particular status and role of the incorporeals in the Stoic *systema* which determines the kind of relation there is between the bodies and the incorporeals such as to

⁸² See Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1074D about the *lekta*: ‘can there be any greater absurdity than that they have no part in the essence of being (*tēs ousias tou ontos*)?’ In *Adv. Col.* 1116B Plutarch accuses the Stoics of having ‘robbed’ the incorporeals of their existence, because as incorporeals, according to Plutarch, these should be the supreme existents, like the Forms.

result in the cosmic structure, as it is conceived by the Stoics. The constituents are accordingly described with reference to the relations that hold up the structure. For instance, the incorporeal void, described as ‘that which can be occupied’, surrounds the cosmos, thereby guaranteeing the cosmos a place to expand into and occupy at the time of the conflagration.⁸³ There is thus a development, an end and a regeneration of the world thanks to the relation between the cosmos and the void, and in fact, in virtue of that relation.

Not so for the Epicureans, though they too consider the void as a real constituent of the cosmos, and also as an incorporeal. But, because they think of incorporeality very differently from the Stoics, and because the void is the only incorporeal, they provide an utterly different account of reality. One aspect, for instance, is that reality is that of which there is no beginning, middle or ending, nor programmed regeneration of our world.⁸⁴ We shall examine this in more detail. But it is crucial to see, at this stage, that the ontological framework is not merely the backdrop to a technical discussion between the Epicureans and the Stoics about language; rather it is the main subject of discussion. What there is to say depends on what there is.

On the Epicurean account, body and void alone exist (Ep. Her. 39–40), because body and void alone exist ‘by themselves’ (*kath’ heauto*). Epicurus makes use of the formula *kath’ heauto*, which is much used, with numerous distinctions, in Plato and Aristotle (who distinguishes different uses, e.g. at *Met.* 5.18). But Epicurus reinvests the formula with a straightforward distinction: what is *kath’ heauto* exists independently, and whatever cannot be even thought to exist independently, is therefore not *kath’ heauto* and does not exist. But everything which satisfies the criterion for independent existence, exists in the same way. Thus, void and body exist independently and share an equal status as *kath’ heauto*, existing by themselves.⁸⁵

Crucially, it is not on the basis of features marking corporeality or incorporeality that something is said to exist. Rather, a thing exists in virtue of not depending on something else. Thus the features which subsequently characterize body and void, e.g. tangibility for body, intangibility for void, merely serve, at a further stage, to distinguish between them. However, they are not the features which determine ontological status. Epicurus thus makes a radical

⁸³ D.L. 7.140; on this progress towards the conflagration see FREDE 2005 pp.230–1, and 1.3.5 with n.140 above.

⁸⁴ See Epicurus Her. 45 and 88–90. There are also infinitely many other worlds. It is not excluded that, by sheer chance, the same world could come about repeatedly out of its own destruction, or concomitantly with another, but there is no necessity or intention behind that possible phenomenon: see Epicurus Her. 74–5.

⁸⁵ Recourse to the *kath’ heauto* marker of existence is ingrained in the Epicurean tradition, as we find it put to use by Polystratus *Irr. Cont.* col.xxvii, 1–3 (in INDELLI 1978), who distinguishes between relatives, *pros ti*, which are not *kath’ heauto*, and bodies, which are *kath’ heauto*, see LEMAIRE & GIOVACCHINI 2014 on how this distinction is projected by Polystratus onto the distinction between by nature and by convention (*nomos/physis*) and is supposed to resolve it.

reversal of basic Platonic doctrine insofar as for the Platonists it is the features of materiality and perceptibility, or lack of them, which determine the status of a thing. Perceptibility, changeability, mortality, and so on, mark out a state of ontological dependence on, and hence inferiority to, what is not perceptible, intangible, unchanging, and therefore, properly speaking, existing. Thus the view which is challenged by the Epicurean position is the view according to which incorporeality marks out a specific ontological status in virtue of the characteristic of incorporeality. For the Platonists it marks out the highest or only, properly speaking, form of reality. But for the Stoics as well, as we have seen, meeting the criteria for corporeality, or not, establishes the ontological status of things. However, for the Stoics, in contrast to the Platonists, this determines, not a hierarchy, but a distinction in modes of reality, between the corporeals and the incorporeals. These are the lessons learnt from Plato (3.3 above) and the reason why Plutarch makes such generous concessions towards the Stoics in the *Adversus Colotem*.

By considering not incorporeality, but ontological independence, in terms of existing *kath' heauto*, as the criterion for existence, incorporeality loses its special standing. Epicurus refers to the 'common usage' of the term 'incorporeal':

according to the common usage of the term, we say that the incorporeal applies to that which can be thought of as existing independently; but it is impossible to think of an incorporeal existing independently except for the void.⁸⁶

The common usage, which Epicurus is pinpointing here, is that according to which incorporeality determines the status of independent existence. Who are the upholders of this common usage? The target is broad: anyone who puts incorporeality as the standard for existence, whether these be the Platonic Forms, or Aristotelian immanent Forms, or indeed, as in the case which Epicurus picks out immediately after these lines (*Her.* 67), anyone who thinks the soul is incorporeal and separable from the body. This sweeping overview of the rival schools does not necessarily exclude the Stoics either, though they do not think the soul is incorporeal. They do, however, take incorporeality as a marker of ontological status.

Epicurus questions the connection between being incorporeal and having an independent existence. For there is a direct connection, which is implied by the common usage. But there is no such connection for Epicurus. On his view, there is one, and only one, item which satisfies both the requirements for incorporeality (in being contrasted with body), and has independent existence: this is the void. But what makes it an independently existing item is not its

⁸⁶ Ep. *Her.* 67: 'τὸ ἀσώματον λέγομεν κατὰ τὴν πλείστην ὁμίλιαν τοῦ ὀνόματος ἐπὶ τοῦ καθ' ἑαυτὸ νοηθέντος ἂν· καθ' ἑαυτὸ δὲ οὐκ ἔστι νοῆσαι τὸ ἀσώματον πλὴν τοῦ κενοῦ.'

incorporeality. Rather, it is that we are able to think of it as independently existing. It turns out only two items can be thought of as independently existing: they are body (the indivisible bodies and principles of all larger composites, i.e. the atoms, cf. *Her.* 41) and void.

Conceivability is the guarantor of independent existence. It is the grounding validation which establishes the void as the only independent incorporeal existent. Since void happens to be incorporeal, it is indeed an incorporeal which has independent existence. There is thus no necessary link from incorporeality to independent existence—a link which Epicurus describes his rivals as being committed to. The degree of accuracy of the critique of rival schools of thought is, as noted, dubious to say the least. It certainly extends beyond a primal anti-Platonism, and serves not so much as a pointed critique as rather a trampoline, from which to raise all the better, in all its contrasting points of distinction, the Epicurean view.⁸⁷ Namely, that it is not the features of an object which give it its ontological status. How could they, since features, or properties, or accidents, what Epicurus calls '*sumbebēkota*', have no independent existence:

properties . . . must not be thought of as having independent existence, for that is impossible to think of; but they do not altogether not exist, but neither are they distinct incorporeal things existing in addition to this [the body], nor are they a part of it. But the whole body, taken as a whole, has, from all of these properties, its own permanent nature.⁸⁸

Properties do not exist separately from the body, nor are they even separable in thought from the body they belong to.⁸⁹ They give the body its 'nature', but they themselves have neither nature nor being. Epicurus' discussion of properties has a direct relation to his critique and rejection of Platonic Forms. For it is a starting-point of the Platonic approach to distinguish something like a property from a perceptible object.⁹⁰ When Epicurus says here that the

⁸⁷ On the strategies of polemics in Epicurus see SEDLEY 1976, with support from recent work on the later Epicureans, showing that the polemical approach becomes sharper and more personal with the later Epicureans—though not, for all that, more doctrinally precise; see MONTARESE 2012 pp.31–2; VERDE 2017 *esp.* pp.77–8.

⁸⁸ *Ep. Her.* 68–9: 'οὐθ' ὡς καθ' ἐαυτὰς εἰσι φύσεις δοξαστέον, οὐ γὰρ δυνατόν ἐπινοῆσαι τοῦτο, οὔτε ὅλως ὡς οὐκ εἰσίν, οὐθ' ὡς ἕτερ' ἅττα προσυπάρχοντα τούτῳ ἀσώματα, οὐθ' ὡς μόρια τούτου, ἀλλ' ὡς τὸ ὅλον σῶμα καθόλου ἐκ τούτων πάντων τὴν ἑαυτοῦ φύσιν ἔχον αἰδίων'. See also S.E. *M.* 10.220–3 who reverts to talk of the Epicurean properties as 'inseparable' in the same characteristic move to level out all 'dogmatic' talk about ontological distinctions, as noted in 6.1.1 above.

⁸⁹ On inconceivability being the grounding for necessary inexistence see BARNES 1988 pp.125–6.

⁹⁰ E.g. *Plato Rep.* 5.476a before the Forms are properly considered in the argument: just and unjust, 'each is one, but in virtue of their association with actions and bodies, and with one another, they present themselves everywhere, and appear each to be many'. For Epicurus there is no such thing as just or unjust which can be disassociated in the first place from the action or body it makes up. See further on Epicurus' rejection of the Forms BRONOWSKI 2013 *esp.* pp.263–7.

properties are not ‘something incorporeal in addition’, he is again relaying a common usage, that of attributing incorporeality to properties, as the Platonists do (as discussed at 3.3.3 above). He dismisses that attribution precisely on these terms: namely that incorporeality should not confer independent existence. Rather, something which has independent existence might turn out to be incorporeal, but then ‘incorporeal’ indicates something different from what it does in common usage.

For Epicurus, being incorporeal is itself something like having a property for a body. It is not that properties can also be incorporeal. But, depending on the kind of independent existent in question (body or void), it either has properties which constitute its whole or ‘full nature’ (*plērē phusis*, *Her.* 41) or it has incorporeality which establishes its ‘intangible nature’ (*anaphē phusis*).⁹¹ Being incorporeal for the void is what having properties is for the body. As far as ontological status is concerned, having properties and being incorporeal are on a par, that is to say, non-existent ‘escorts’ of their respective existents, body or void.⁹²

6.4.3. The Intangible or Incorporeal Nature of Epicurean Void

6.4.3.1. Lucretius 1.433–40: the Distinction between Extension and Resistance

Epicurus introduces a distinction between the ‘common usage’ of ‘incorporeal’ as determining a status in reality, and the Epicurean use of ‘incorporeal’ as designating a feature which consists in an absence of perceptible properties. The void thus is incorporeal, but this is not its status, it is what makes up its nature, as opposed to the nature of bodies. Epicurus talks of the ‘intangible nature’ of the void. This intangible nature distinguishes void from body, which, in contrast, has a tangible nature, but, not at the level of what it is to exist (ontological status), but rather at the level of a way of being. This is what Lucretius explains when he speaks of the ‘presence’ or ‘extension’ (*augmen*) of each and every independent existent, be it tangible or intangible:

1For each thing, whatever it will be, will have to be some kind of thing in itself,
2through extension (or presence), large or small, as long as it exists. 3If it is
tangible, however light and tenuous, 4it will increase the quantity of body, and
add to its sum total. 5If it is intangible, 6it is unable to prevent every meandering

⁹¹ Lucretius *DRN* 1.454: being intangible is an example of a permanent property.

⁹² Epicurus *Her.* 69–71 speaks about properties as ‘escorting’, *συμπαρὰκολουθοῦντα* ‘the bodies (aggregates of atoms): some are permanent escorts (designated as *sumbebēkota*), e.g. ‘the sweet’ of honey, some are fleeting (designated as *sumptōmata*), e.g. being tanned of Socrates.

thing going right through it from every angle, γ then clearly this is the emptiness which we call the void.⁹³

There is a revealing point of textual criticism regarding this passage. Karl Lachmann, in the first modern edition of Lucretius, first published in Berlin in 1850, inverts the second and third lines so that the term translated here as ‘extension (or presence)’, namely ‘*augmen*’, is exclusively attributed to ‘that which is tangible’. He is followed in this by Cyril Bailey in the Oxford edition of 1947. The Latin word is then translated in reference to the cognate verbal form ‘*augebit*’ in the fourth line, and is thus the ‘increase’ which ‘increases’. The translation reads:

$\text{}_1$ For each thing, whatever it will be, will have to be some kind of thing in itself. $\text{}_3$ If it is tangible, however light and tenuous, $\text{}_2$ through increase, large or small, as long as it exists. it will increase the quantity of body, and add to its sum total...

It is not difficult to see why Lachmann inverts the lines in this way: it is bodies which should have extension or bulk. There is, to support this, a grounding Epicurean definition of body according to which body is that which has extension across three dimensions. This, as we have already discussed, is a shared definition of body attributed to the Epicureans and the Stoics, adopted from a definition of solids given by the geometers: namely that bodies indeed have three dimensions, but crucially with the qualification that a body is that which has resistance in addition (*met’ antitupias*).⁹⁴ This added qualification comes to its own in this discussion of Epicurean metaphysics. For extension and resistance are not interchangeable, nor does the one imply the other.

For this to become clearer, we must re-invert the lines and keep to what is in the manuscripts, which we find in Josef Martin’s Teubner edition from 1934, who follows in this the earlier Teubner edition by Adolf Brieger of 1894. Martin does not keep an emendation Brieger prints, however (changing ‘*aliquid*’ in line 1 to ‘*aliquo*’). Brieger’s intention seems to have been to confirm the order of the lines by underlining the relation of ‘*aliquo*... *augmine*’. The indefinite adjective ‘*aliquo*’ would thus qualify our problem-term ‘*augmine*’ in line 2, to read: ‘each thing will be a thing in itself, whatever its extension, large or small’. This is instead of leaving ‘*aliquid*’ to qualify the already emphatic ‘*id ipsum*’ in line 1: ‘each thing, whatever it might be, will be a thing in itself, as long as it has *augmen*, etc.’. The formula ‘*id ipsum*’, as Bailey notes, is the Latin transposition of Epicurus’ *kath’ heauto*. Whether more neatly, with the

⁹³ Lucr. DRN I.433–40: ‘ $\text{}_1$ nam quod cumque erit, esse aliquid debet id ipsum | $\text{}_2$ augmine vel grandi vel parvo denique, dum sit; | $\text{}_3$ cui si tactus erit quamvis levis exiguusque, | $\text{}_4$ | $\text{}_4$ corporis augebit numerum summamque sequetur; | $\text{}_5$ sin intactile erit, nulla de parte quod ullam | $\text{}_6$ rem prohibere queat per se transire meantem | $\text{}_7$ scilicet hoc id erit, vacuum quod inane vocamus.’ Reading here the Teubner text edited by MARTIN (1953) rather than BAILEY’s Oxford edition (1947), for reasons stated in the following pages.

⁹⁴ S.E. PH 3.46 and M. 10.12; see 3.1.1 with n.15 above.

emendation of *aliquid* to *aliquo*, or more insistently and less elegantly, by sticking to the manuscript reading with '*aliquid*', one thing is clear: that this first line sets out to cover comprehensively every and any kind of thing which deserves to be considered as independent in itself (according to the Epicurean criteria), and excludes anything which is not independent in itself, namely properties. It is more than plausible to expect that Lucretius should next describe a fundamental characteristic by which something independent in itself satisfies this status. The recourse to '*augmen*' plays precisely that role.

It is a difficult and strange word to use here. But the strangeness is well prepared and signalled by an over-emphatic context. If we keep to the manuscript reading '*aliquid*', the insistence on the indeterminacy of the items which are, whatever else they may be, independent in themselves, anticipates the specialized usage of the term '*augmen*'. If we accept the emendation to '*aliquo*', the inclusivist indeterminacy of the pronoun shifts to '*augmen*' itself. It indicates all the more that '*augmen*' must be taken within a specialized context, namely that of explaining what gives the status of an independent thing in itself to whatever has it. The whole passage, *DRN* I.430–82, is a dynamic hub for the establishment of a specialized vocabulary for Latin Epicurean ontology. Thus Lucretius launches in these lines a number of terms such as '*eventa*' and '*coniuncta*' to translate the two kinds of properties, *sumbebēkota* and *sumptōmata*, distinguished by Epicurus (see 6.4.3.2 below). These terms do not get a systematic use in the later books of *DRN*, nor does '*augmen*'. In fact, these lines constitute the main passage in the *DRN* in which the ontological framework is discussed and established, and it is not revisited subsequently.

David Sedley (1982 p.190) retains the manuscript order of the lines and thereby underlines the distinction Lucretius is making between having extension, and, when it comes to body, having 'added resistance'. Sedley thus proposes 'extension' as a translation for '*augmen*', positing that there is a kind of extension without resistance, and an extension which has added resistance for bodies. In the wake of Sedley's clarifications, the distinction is made between an existential presence—hence my own suggested translations as 'presence', in parallel to 'extension'—and manifestations of that presence, i.e. ways of being, which can be of the tangible or intangible kind. Tangible is for the things which have extension with added resistance; intangible for those which have extension without resistance. Sedley concludes that having extension is a basic premiss which guarantees that other known incorporeal things such as the Platonic Forms do not get mistaken for the incorporeal things Epicurus is talking about. The great objection to the manuscript order of the lines is, as Bailey puts it: 'that space has *augmen*, which is impossible'.⁹⁵ But

⁹⁵ BAILEY 1947 vol.1 p.669 commentary to lines 1.433–6.

this is because Bailey, like Lachmann, does not distinguish between what takes up space and what makes space, space. What takes up space is what grows—and this is Bailey's suggested translation of 'increase' for '*augmen*'—or has bulk (which Bailey indicates would be the wrong understanding here in any case); but what makes space, space is an intangible presence which is not nothing at all, but something in its own right, on a par with bodies.

Though the text is difficult, especially because Lucretius does not make a similar recourse to the use of '*augmen*' anywhere else in the *DRN*, he is not departing from Epicurus here, but rather belabouring an important and subtle point of distinction between body and void. For talk of presence, or extension which can have or lack resistance, captures a metaphysical insight in Epicurus. That extension is a first requisite which thus has 'manifold modes of determination', to use an expression from modern mathematics. The expression designates the construction of an extension which precedes analysis of space and solids.⁹⁶ Lucretius' *augmen* is thus an indeterminate extension which underlies the subsequently determinate body or void. Body and void thus are the only things which exist since they satisfy the first condition of extension, and not because one is full and the other empty.

6.4.3.2. *Incorporeality as an Epicurean Property: Epicurus vs. Lucretius*

Building on this suggestion and focusing on the place of the incorporeal in Epicurus, it appears that Epicurus, and Lucretius here, in his wake, are concerned less with distinguishing between different kinds of incorporeals than with pinpointing a category mistake—the mistake of taking incorporeality for a marker of ontological status. Gabor Betegh proposes to make a distinction between a 'metaphysical' and a 'physical' analysis of bodies and void here.⁹⁷ It is perhaps unfair to Epicurus, who would not recognize a distinction between physics and metaphysics.⁹⁸ The distinction is useful,

⁹⁶ See BANKS 2014 pp.182–94 on Bernhard Riemann's work on the foundations of geometry (1867) and Hermann Grassman's theory of extension (*Ausdehnungslehre*, 1844) and their influence on the monism of Ernst Mach and Bertrand Russell.

⁹⁷ BETEGH 2006 p.280.

⁹⁸ It is under the study of physics, that is, of nature, '*φυσιολογία*', that the existence of atoms and the void is established, see *Her.* 37; the whole *Letter to Herodotus*, which deals with the existence of the atoms, the void, the infinity of worlds, and the birth of language is in effect set under the banner of *phusiologia*. As also the *Letter to Pythocles*, on celestial matters, in which Epicurus emphasizes that this is *phusiologia*, and not a study of 'empty assumptions' ('*ἀξιώματα κενά*'), which seems to take aim at the study and practice of dialectic. Lucretius' own choice of a mass term like '*augmen*' suggests a commitment to a monist physicalist account. This kind of emphasis demarcates Epicurus from the Stoics, who also bring under the heading of physics, proofs for the existence of body, causation, astronomy, etc., but who from the start introduce an active principle they also call 'god' in contrast to a passive principle (D.L. 7.135–6) and account for providence (D.L. 7.138), which opens a door towards a discussion of metaphysics in a way the Epicurean viewpoint does not.

however, for it helps resolve a latent concern in Sedley's concluding remarks, namely that there remains a great discrepancy between the modes of existence of body and void. Lucretius himself suggests that if the existent is tangible, hence a body, it will always come to increase the overall mass of bodies. Thus it seems that this will always be at the expense of the *augmen*, i.e. the extension, of void, which must recede to allow for the increase in body. But this suggestion seems to conflate two different concerns: about existence on the one hand, and the mode of existence on the other. For, without jeopardizing the equality in being, this equality seems to be challenged by an inequality in terms of the capacity to hold on to an allotted extension. Void has an unequal capacity to retain its extension compared to body.

But this is a result which articulates in terms of physics what is actually a question of metaphysics, to use Betegh's formula. That is to say: the Epicureans establish the equal independent existence of body and void as a question of metaphysics, and the contrasting behaviour of body and void in terms of physics, namely in terms of the kind of properties each has which make up their respective natures (in the main, tangible or intangible). The advantage of this clear-cut distinction is that the contrast between body and void is reduced to a mere question of the kind of properties, which, in any case, are not metaphysically relevant since they have no existence apart from when they are inherent in the thing (body or void). It follows that the importance of the properties is minimized when it comes to their defining role in the existence of the thing they are the properties of. This means that being incorporeal, for instance, is not relevant to the existence of the void. In contrast, what is relevant is being an independent thing which does not rely on its properties.

Yet Lucretius' use of '*augmen*', such an expressive physicalist descriptor, which must fit both body and void—and which in the other handful of occurrences in the *DRN* is always associated with body explicitly⁹⁹—is hard to straitjacket into a purely status-establishing, or 'metaphysical', use. After all, in the following line Lucretius writes that the tangible thing '*corporis augebat numerum*', 'swells the ranks of body', using the same root verb '*augere*' which gives the noun '*augmen*'. Sedley is right in following the plastic connotations of the term to suggest the difficulties in sustaining the equality, in physical terms, of body and void, with regard to their capacity to keep hold of their extension. It seems clear enough, however, that this must be what Lucretius is aiming to establish here, namely the equal standing of body and void insofar as their ontological status is concerned.

⁹⁹ E.g. Lucr. *DRN* 3.266–8 where the '*augmen corporis*' is one mass of a body, which corresponds to flesh ('*viscer*') made whole ('*perfectum*') from the sensible properties (colour, smell, taste) which constitute it. Also Lucr. *DRN* 2.73: life and death of aggregates of atoms come down to atoms leaving one body to '*augmine donant*', i.e. give more bulk, to another.

Lucretius' *'augmen'*, in other words, does not fit the Epicurean *'kath' heauto'*, which more directly points to Betegh's metaphysical analysis. This could ultimately come down to a characteristically Lucretian attempt to 'out-Epicureanize' Epicurus by zealously applying only physicalist descriptors where Epicurus strays too far into logic and metaphysics, which Epicurus himself is wary of.¹⁰⁰ From the following lines in our Lucretius passage, it is clear that Lucretius' main concern is to present the void as that which allows bodies to form and change within it (*DRN* 1.443). There are thus three capacities which the *augmen* of independent existents has the capacity to actualize: either acting, or being acted upon, or letting things move within it. These capacities are realized depending on the properties, or lack of them, of the thing. Thus it is down to the properties that make up the thing, and not to the thing itself, for a thing to act, or be acted upon, or, equally, let other things aggregate and disaggregate through or within the thing itself (*'in eo'*). As an independent existent, the thing itself merely has the potential for any three of these kinds of behaviour. This is confirmed by an argument developed by Epicurus in the lines directly following his discussion of the distinction between the common usage of 'incorporeal' and the Epicurean usage, quoted above:

the void cannot act or be acted upon, but only allows for movement through itself of bodies. Therefore, those who say that the soul is incorporeal speak foolishly. For if the soul were such, it could not act or be acted upon. But now, it is obvious that both of these properties equally belong to the soul.¹⁰¹

The void, with its lack of properties and thus incorporeal nature, actualizes the capacity of allowing for movement within it—the third option clearly set out by Lucretius, which is assumed here in Epicurus. The void thus lacks the other two kinds of properties (acting or being acted upon). Epicurus calls acting and being acted upon 'properties' (here the non-permanent *sumptōmata*). Lucretius, in the lines following our quoted passage, also goes on to give his Latin versions of these properties: *'coniuncta'* for the permanent properties (e.g. heat of fire), *'eventa'* for the non-permanent, under which we find actions and passivities, which come and go without altering the thing itself, such as slavery or wealth (*DRN* 1.449–58). It is these properties which make up the nature of a

¹⁰⁰ A famous example is Lucretius' adaptation and translation of the Greek *'ἄτομος'* as the Latin *'corpuscula'* or *'corpus individuum'*, but never as *'atomus'* (which however is used often by Cicero); Lucretius keeps to a strictly physicalist description, avoiding the abstract connotations of indivisibility inherent in the Greek term; see SEDLEY 1998 p.38 and REINHARDT 2005.

¹⁰¹ Ep. Her. 67: 'τὸ δὲ κενὸν οὔτε ποιῆσαι οὔτε παθεῖν δύναται, ἀλλὰ κίνησιν μόνον δι' ἑαυτοῦ τοῖς σώμασι παρέχεται. ὥσθ' οἱ λέγοντες ἀσώματον εἶναι τὴν ψυχὴν ματαιῶνται. οὐθὲν γὰρ ἂν ἐδύνατο ποιεῖν οὔτε πάσχειν, εἰ ἦν τοιαύτη· νῦν δ' ἐναργῶς ἀμφότερα ταῦτα διαλαμβάνομεν περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν τὰ συμπτώματα'.

thing and enable it to actualize one or more of the potential kinds of behaviour available to an independent existent.

In Epicurus' argument, the soul, whose nature is made up from the properties which ultimately make it soul and not something else, is both active and passive: e.g. by keeping the body alive or 'animating the flesh' as Lucretius puts it, *DRN* 3.266, and, for instance, in receiving (passively) sense-data.¹⁰² It is in virtue of actualizing these modes of behaviour that Epicurus can infer that the soul is made up of these kinds of properties. This implies that the soul does not lack sensible properties. Lacking sensible properties for an independent existent would imply that the thing is incorporeal. But the soul has properties, hence the soul cannot have the non-sensible property of being incorporeal. The soul therefore must be a body. For our present purposes (which are not the analysis of the nature of the soul), the most relevant point of the argument is the distinction between the properties (acting, being acted upon, or allowing for motion from within) and being an independent thing. Thus being incorporeal is one way of behaving of a thing, which corresponds to actualizing a thing's capacity to allow other bodies to move within it. The soul does not do that, therefore the soul is not incorporeal.

Talking of behaviour or actualization of capacities is not a deviation or anachronism compared to Epicurus. It is an attempt to unfold the connotations of the difficult Epicurean term '*epibolai*', used to describe the properties. Epicurus says that each property has its own *epibolē* and can be distinguished one from another (*Her.* 69). These are projections or expressions of the properties, that is, properly speaking the way that they determine the behaviour of the body, by actualizing its capacities (e.g. the soul's capacity (*dunatai*) to act and be acted upon).

There is thus a logical, or metaphysical, distinction made by Epicurus between the ontological status determined by *kath' heauto* independence, and the actualization of its capacities by the properties belonging to an independent existent. Lucretius interprets the independent ontological status in a physicalist direction by describing it as an *augmen*, an extension or a presence, which can be corporeal or incorporeal. In so doing, Lucretius contributes to forging a materialist account of Epicurean thought, since even the non-material void is described as taking up space. In Epicurus' own writing, however, there is a real distinction between the abstracted establishment of being, and the material expressions of each kind of being through its properties.

The aims in Epicurus and Lucretius are also slightly different. For Epicurus, the aim is to establish the independent existence of void on a par with body, so

¹⁰² That it is 'obvious' or 'clear and distinct' (*'enargōs'*) that the soul behaves in this way is a key argumentative tool in Epicurean thought: see D.L. 10.33 and ASMS 2009 pp.85–7.

that neither incorporeality nor corporeality play a role in the proof and establishment of independent existence, against the Platonists, and indeed the Stoics. For Lucretius, the aim is to show that there is nothing more than body and void in reality, and that everything else is reduced to properties of either body or void—properties which are manifest either permanently (e.g. the intangibility of void), or transiently (e.g. war and peace). People, places, and events can all be deflated into a sequence of states corresponding to the changing configuration of atoms as they move through the void.¹⁰³ In other words, Lucretius is concerned with showing that causation, and any kind of change, is nothing but the actualization of different properties, which do not exist but for their dependence on either body or void. Epicurus, on the other hand, is concerned with showing that the independent existence of body and void does not rely on their properties. In the light of this shift of focus, Lucretius' *'augmen'* is less jarring as it serves a different purpose than the logical establishment of independent existence.

6.4.4. Epicureans and Stoics: Fundamental Incompatibilities

6.4.4.1. *Properties and Bodies*

Together Epicurus and Lucretius comprehensively set out the radical and serious differences with the Stoic account of bodies and incorporeals. Acting or being acted upon, which Epicurus and Lucretius list as two of the capacities of an independent existent (which has *'augmen'*, following Lucretius), are recognizable features from our previous discussion of Stoic ontology. They ground the criterion for corporeality for the Stoics: 'everything which acts is a body' (D.L. 7.56, and 3.1 above). For the Stoics, acting or being acted upon mark the divide between bodies and incorporeals, which are incapable of either. It is a divide which makes it impossible for bodies and incorporeals to exist in the same way. However, for Epicurus bodies and the void exist in the same way. Acting and being acted upon are features which properties of body actualize, but which, as capacities, characterize any independent existent—anything with *augmen*, as Lucretius states. The order is therefore reversed: if something is an independent existent, it can either act or be acted upon, or indeed can let itself be traversed by a body. The three possibilities are on the same level. As possibilities, they do not predetermine the 'nature', to speak like Epicurus, of the thing.

¹⁰³ See Lucr. DNR 1.464–82: events such as the abduction of Helen, or the sack of Troy, are broken down into a series of juxtaposed 'properties of body and of space in which each thing occurs'. Thus ANNAS 1991 p.84: 'an event or state must turn out to be an atomic event or state'. And see CLAY 1983 p.125 and n.20 on the force of 'reducing history to accidents'.

For the Stoics, as we saw (in 3.1.3.3 above), the criterion for corporeality covers both the capacity to act and be acted upon, and actually acting or being acted upon. For Epicurus, capacities and their actualizations belong to different levels of analysis. Capacities underscore ontological status: if something is an independent existent it can either act, or be acted upon, or let itself be traversed. Actualizations, on the other hand, are the expression of the properties which make up a thing, or the thing's nature: thus the properties of a body are constantly actualizing its capacities for acting and being acted upon. In effect, a body, for Epicurus, is always and constantly acting and/or being acted upon. For atoms are in constant motion, 'getting entangled and enclosed' such as to form composite bodies, which are, for that reason, constantly in a state of alteration and verging towards dissolution (Ep. *Her.* 42–3). In the same way the intangible nature of the void is constantly allowing bodies to traverse it.

That acting or being acted upon is secondary to the existence of the independent existents for Epicurus marks a major difference with the Stoics. For it determines an utterly different worldview. For the Epicureans, causation, change, how one thing becomes something else, what happens to something when something happens, are subordinate questions to the imperative of existence of the ultimate constituents, body and void. For the Stoics, those questions are the fundamental questions which determine what exists, what is real, and what reality is like. For the Stoics, what is fundamental and thus determines existence is the relations between things. Thus the analysis of the kind of relations there are, is the grounding analysis which uncovers what reality is like. The relation between things frames the reality of states-of-affairs, which are what there is to say and thus what the Stoics designate as *lekta*.

It is consonant with the ontology envisaged on Epicurean doctrine, that there should be no place for *lekta*. Firstly, because there is no room in that ontological framework for anything additional to body and void. In this first respect, the rejection of *lekta* is on a par with the Epicurean rejection of the Platonic Forms. Unlike the Peripatetic critique of the Stoics, the merit of the Epicurean appraisal of *lekta*, as reported for instance by Plutarch, is to have acknowledged the status of *lekta* on Stoic terms, to then reject it on Epicurean terms. From a second, more fundamental perspective, the rejection of *lekta* by the Epicureans is the rejection of the reality of the relation between a body and its property, or accident, i.e. the rejection of the independent reality of states-of-affairs. As we have seen, for the Epicureans bodies and actions are the phenomenal manifestations of transient atomic configurations. Nothing happens in the world apart from a resistance or a receding of an atom, enabled by the intangibility of the void, which separates each atom from the others (Ep. *Her.* 44).

6.4.4.2. 'Incorporeal' is Said in Many Ways: a Question of Time

The discussion about what is incorporeal reveals itself to be crucial for the most important question: on what there is. Epicurus succeeds in marking out a way of understanding 'incorporeal' which is utterly distinct from the Platonic and Peripatetic lines, and also utterly distinct from the Stoic understanding. Namely that being incorporeal is a property which happens to belong to one of the only two independent entities in the world, but which plays no role in determining that status. It is this distinctive usage that S.E. conveys when comparing Stoics and Epicureans on the nature of time. For S.E. concludes that when Epicureans speak of the incorporeal, it is not in the way the Stoics understand it.

But from this, it is clear that Epicurus thinks time is incorporeal, but not like the Stoics do; for them, as we have said, time subsists as an incorporeal something which is conceived as a thing in itself. Epicurus, by contrast, thinks it is a property of things.¹⁰⁴

This remark on Epicurus comes as a conclusive confirmation of what S.E., a few paragraphs earlier, had announced as the Stoic view about time, namely that it is incorporeal 'and moreover, a thing conceived as a something in itself'.¹⁰⁵ In the following sections we shall finally devote our attention to what this means for the Stoics, but a last comment on the argumentative strategy employed here by S.E. is helpful. When S.E. introduces the question of the incorporeal, he is halfway into a long discussion of what the Dogmatists have said about time, begun at *M.* 10.169 and ending at *M.* 10.247. Talk of incorporeals marks a turning point in the discussion, as the target changes. In the first half of the discussion S.E. compiles a doxographical collection of definitions and descriptions with some added commentary. He now presents the Dogmatist claims about the ontological status of time. S.E. announces at *M.* 10.215 that the arguments put forward by the Dogmatic schools about the 'ousia', essence, of time, must be thrown into *aporia*, after having 'cast doubts about the *ennoiai*', the conceptions of time.¹⁰⁶ From this point on, the discussion is framed around views arguing that time is either corporeal or incorporeal. S.E. gives the Stoic description of the ontological status of incorporeals as the prototypical view of 'those who say time is an incorporeal' (*M.* 10.218). It is

¹⁰⁴ S.E. *M.* 10.227: 'ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἐκ τούτων φανερόν, ὅτι ὁ Ἐπίκουρος ἀσώματον οἶεται τὸν χρόνον ὑπάρχειν, οὐ παραπλησίως δὲ τοῖς Στωϊκοῖς· ἐκεῖνοι μὲν γάρ, ὡς λέλεκται, ἀσώματόν τι καθ' αὐτὸ νοούμενον ὑπεστήσαντο τὸν χρόνον, Ἐπίκουρος δὲ συμβεβηκὸς τισιν'.

¹⁰⁵ S.E. *M.* 10.218: 'ὅτι πρὸς τῷ ἀσώματον ὑπολαμβάνειν τὸν χρόνον, ἔτι καὶ καθ' αὐτό τι νοούμενον πρᾶγμα δοξάζουσι τούτων'.

¹⁰⁶ The first half of the first section is devoted to the description of time as an interval and as a measure of motion, the next section, to the division of time into past, present, and future. For a clear mapping out of the order of presentation see BOBZIEN 2015 esp. pp.277–82.

a recognizably Stoic description, but at this point S.E. leaves open which dogmatic school he has in mind. He then moves on to discuss Epicurean ontology, and specifically the Epicurean account of the inexistence of properties, in view of the Epicurean proof for the sole existence of atoms and void (*M.* 10.219–27). It is this side-discussion which ends with our quoted passage from *M.* 10.227 (n.104 above). S.E. thus concludes the analysis of the view about the incorporeality of time by reiterating the Stoic view with which he had begun this part of the discussion. But now the view is bolstered and more fine-tuned, thanks to the contrast which has been shown between two different views about the incorporeal—a contrast which is all the more important in that it marks a divergence within the same group of people who both claim that time is incorporeal and not corporeal, the Stoics and the Epicureans.

S.E. comes back to the Epicureans before the end of the discussion about time, to refute, or try to refute, their view (*M.* 10.238–44). He never mentions incorporeality and instead focuses on the inexistence of properties, and hence the inexistence of time. But in the paragraphs devoted to the refutation of the Stoics, it is the status of incorporeality which is targeted, with attempts at showing the incongruity of associating the status of a something with an incorporeal (the Sextan leitmotiv, as discussed in 6.1.1 above). One very good reason S.E. does not further insist on Epicurus' view that time is an incorporeal is that, apart from this passage (and its parallel in S.E. *PH* 3.138–9), it is nowhere to be found in the corpus of Epicurean texts. As we have seen, in the previous pages, Epicurus says that the only thing which happens to be incorporeal is the void.¹⁰⁷ It would seem then that S.E. is somewhat over-zealous when he presumes to conclude, 'from what has been said' (namely that properties only exist insofar as they are properties of a body), that Epicurus thinks time is incorporeal. In effect, when it comes to refuting the Epicurean view, S.E. restricts himself to a recognizable Epicurean account and does not mention the incorporeality of time.

Susanne Bobzien has shown how the very framing of the question about the essence of time in terms of being corporeal or incorporeal is a Sextan invention, though it is an artificial coagulation of recognizable views which do not ultimately bely S.E.'s reliable sources.¹⁰⁸ This much is apparent in the case of S.E.'s report on Epicurean ontology: for he characterizes, in conformity with Epicurean texts, the distinction between body and void as a presence of resistance (*antitupia*) on the one hand, and of a yielding (*eixis*) on the other (*M.* 10.221–2). He thus preserves (and confirms) the contrast between two kinds of properties for the characterization of body and void, rather than a

¹⁰⁷ Epicurus *Her.* 69 explicitly says that properties are 'not something incorporeal, in addition to bodies'. And see Lucr. *DRN* 1.480: properties 'nec ratione cluere eadem qua constet inane', 'are not considered to exist in the same way the void does'.

¹⁰⁸ BOBZIEN 2015 *esp.* pp.319–21.

property on the one hand and its absence on the other. Why go off script at the end? Two main answers suggest themselves.

Firstly, building on Bobzien's comments, it would seem that S.E. must both consolidate and justify his reorganized doxography, opposing the corporealists and the incorporealists about time, in what is meant to be an exhaustive division.¹⁰⁹ He thus relies on what is already an established tradition, that of grouping Stoics and Epicureans together (cf. 6.4.1 n.80 above), relying on the generally shared view about the presence of incorporeals within the sensible world, on both doctrines. The second answer has a more pointed aim, not historiographical but conceptual. This is not the first, nor only place S.E. attacks the Stoics, both for establishing incorporeals as independent real things, and for considering a 'something' (*ti*) as a marker of ontological status that both corporeal things and incorporeal things satisfy.¹¹⁰ It is a very important point of critique for S.E. In this context, S.E. can fine-tune the analysis of the Stoic position about incorporeals through a contrast with the Stoics' supposedly closest philosophical allies (from a historiographical perspective).

S.E. can do this because, from within the Epicurean tradition there is already set up an explicit and self-proclaimed deviation from a norm about incorporeality. The norm is presented as such by Epicurus, for instance, with his 'common usage', where Epicurus sets himself against a Platonic and Stoic understanding of incorporeality.¹¹¹ S.E. is however not conforming to an

¹⁰⁹ S.E. *M.* 10.215 draws out a complete and tidy schema: the first branch divides 'the Dogmatists' into those (*οἱ μὲν*) who say time is corporeal, and those (*οἱ δέ*) who say it is incorporeal; a further sub-branch distinguishes the latter group into those (*οἱ μὲν*) who say it is an independent thing, and those (*οἱ δέ*) who say it is a property dependent on something else. Indeed, all the other main dogmatic schools are also mentioned: Plato, Aristotle, the later Peripatetics (whose views about the essence of time are referred back to previous comments about motion and number), and Aenesidemus (who is otherwise not credited anywhere else for this) who appears here as an heir to Heraclitus, since both represent the corporealist view about time. It is difficult to disentangle the views, which result in what BOBZIEN 2015 p.320 rightly calls a 'muddle'. But what is relevant for our purposes is that S.E. is intent on distinguishing a discussion about ontology, or essence, from a physicalist or phenomenologist analysis—even though he refers, confusingly, back to some of the latter representatives in the midst of the former. Part of the reason for the muddle here is presumably S.E.'s self-imposed constraint of exhaustiveness, which leads him to tie together very different schools of thought, brought together to construct an artificially exhaustive account.

¹¹⁰ E.g. S.E. *PH* 2.86, 2.225, 3.134 (specifically about the status of incorporeal place); *M.* 8.75 (on *lekta*); 1.19 and 11.224–5 (on what is teachable).

¹¹¹ Note in this perspective a passing remark by Philoponus *in de An.* 83.27–8 commenting on Democritus' talk of the soul as 'incorporeal fire' with an aside: this is 'not in the primary sense of "incorporeal" (*οὐ κυρίως ἀσώματον*) but rather "incorporeal" as the finest part (*διὰ λεπτομέρειαν*) of what is corporeal'. The aside makes two things clear: (i) that it is Philoponus who interprets Democritus as appealing to a secondary usage of 'incorporeal', as opposed to a primary usage, i.e. this is not a piece of doctrine taken either from Democritus, or Philoponus's source for Democritus (which would presumably be Aristotle's report of Democritus in *Arist. An.* 1.2, 405a5–12); and (ii) that this is a familiar distinction Philoponus does not need to explain. For

Epicurean way of speaking, or referring to a precise element of doctrine. Rather he is exploiting the opportunity to distinguish usages of the term 'incorporeal', amongst the Dogmatists, between qualifying a dependent property, and establishing the independence of a thing. Setting these two readings of 'incorporeal' side by side is a stratagem of the Sceptic's method, in which two opposing accounts put on the same level cancel each other out. But, especially given that the Epicurean side of the report is faulty and contrived (time is not an incorporeal for Epicurus), the comparison is a topical means, for S.E., of disproving the Stoic view about incorporeality as an independent ontological status. As so often with the Sceptical method, however, placing two such accounts on the same level, as though they were concerned with one and the same problem, is misleading. The incompatibility between the Stoic *systema* and the Epicurean worldview is exemplified with the case of time. But the case of time itself shows that by considering incorporeality as an ontological status, it is the whole Stoic account of reality which is incompatible with the Epicurean view of reality and existence.

6.5. CONCLUSION: INCORPOREALITY AS AN ONTOLOGICAL STATUS

6.5.1. Stoics vs. Epicureans on the Marker of Ontological Status

Between the two uses of 'incorporeal' suggested by Epicurus, the Stoics side with the understanding of the term as indicating a status in reality, and not a negative quality with respect to body. But just as the Epicurean view about existence (body and void are the sole existents) differs from the Stoics (only bodies exist), so does the sense of 'ontological status' differ from one approach to the other. For Epicurus there is only one ontological status a thing can have, i.e. only one way in which a thing is real or belongs to reality. This is summed up in his use of the '*kath' heauto*' formula, which expresses independent existence. There is no way of being real other than existing, i.e. being *kath' heauto*. Thus anything else simply does not exist and is inconceivable, except as belonging to independent existing things. As we saw, the distinction between corporeality and incorporeality does not match the distinction

Philoponus notes 'none of them (i.e. the Presocratics) said this', i.e. that they are not talking about the primary sense of 'incorporeal' but a secondary use. Philoponus is thus projecting onto Democritus a distinction born out of many generations' worth of discussions about the understanding of the notion of an incorporeal, perhaps originating with Epicurus and the parting of the ways between the 'common use' of 'incorporeal' and Epicurus' own usage, easily re-projected onto earlier atomists, and which is belaboured in our passage here in S.E.

between existence and non-existence, precisely because neither corporeality nor incorporeality determines ontological status. But for the Stoics corporeality determines and indeed corresponds itself to an ontological status, given that what is corporeal exists in virtue of being corporeal, i.e. by satisfying the criterion for corporeality, that of being capable of acting or being acted upon (see 3.1 above). What falls short of the criterion, i.e. what cannot act or be acted upon, falls equally short of the ontological status of existence. But existence is not the only status a thing can have in reality. Incorporeality also determines and corresponds to an ontological status, necessarily different from existence. There is thus, for the Stoics, a distinction between having an ontological status and what that status is, in contrast with Epicurus for whom it is one and the same thing.

In the passage quoted from S.E. (*M.* 10.227 in n.104 above), the Stoics are said to hold the view that an incorporeal is '*ti kath' hautō noumenon*', 'something considered in its own right'. Neither the formula '*kath' hautō*', 'in its own right', nor the addition of '*noumenon*', 'conceived of', are familiar Stoic expressions from other sources. Indeed, it is the only time in our sources that S.E. has recourse to these expressions with reference to the Stoics. The only recognizably authentic Stoic term is '*ti*', 'something', which S.E. here glosses with additional qualifiers. The gloss is presumably the fruit of contagion with the Epicurean context of discussion, in which the formula *kath' heauto* is used to characterize independent existents from properties (*S.E.* *M.* 10.220). In those lines S.E. emphasizes the contrast by speaking of the properties as 'considered as (*theōreitai*) existing in relation to the independent existents'.¹¹² He has recourse to the exact same formula a few lines later before revealing that this description corresponds to the Epicurean *sumbebēkota*, i.e. the properties (at *M.* 10.221). These are then distinguished into the familiar eternal properties ('without which it is not possible to *think* (*noēsai*) of body [...] or void', *M.* 10.222), and the fleeting ones (which he further dubs as either 'separated', or 'inseparable'—a terminology which has a misleadingly standardizing effect, as previously noted in 6.1.1 above). The presence, moreover, within S.E.'s report of Epicurean ontology, of the staple Epicurean association between what can be thought of and existence (if something can be thought of, it exists, cf. 6.4.2 with nn.88–9 above), is a further element in support of the contagion claim.

Thus, when it comes to the characterization of Stoic incorporeals, they are said to be 'thought of' as somethings in themselves. S.E. is not thereby adding a new claim that the Stoics consider incorporeals, here time in particular, as mind-related things, but rather transferring Epicurean talk to the Stoics. S.E. thus succeeds in highlighting the opposition between the Stoics and the

¹¹² S.E. *M.* 10.220: 'τὰ δὲ περὶ τοῖς καθ' ἑαυτὰ ὑφ' ἑστώσι θεωρεῖται'.

Epicureans by applying the same descriptives, first in the positive, then in the negative, to one and the same thing, time, which is incorporeal for the Stoics, as it is for Epicurus (following S.E.) but according to two different ways of understanding incorporeal. Thus, for the Epicureans time is not something that can be thought of as existing in itself, whilst for the Stoics, it is.

But, as we have already seen with the Stoics' introduction of the something as a basic marker of reality, in contrast to mind-formed concepts (which are not-somethings (*outina*)), not all somethings are somethings in the same way. For though a something belongs to and constitutes mind-independent reality, some are bodies and some are incorporeal. Their status in reality changes accordingly. S.E. therefore misleadingly levels out the status of the something, *ti*, for the Stoics, with the kind of independent existence bodies and the void have for Epicurus. For Epicurus, having an ontological status is the equivalent to ontological independence. But the identity is far less straightforward for the Stoics. There is a distinction between the way a thing is real, and its being a thing, i.e. between its having an ontological status (being a something, *ti*) and the way it is a something, body or incorporeal. For bodies, it is by existing that they are somethings; for incorporeals, it is by subsisting or sometimes by obtaining. The difficulty for the Stoics is to maintain the claim that incorporeals are not dependent on bodies, whilst distinguishing subsistence from existence. Thus, according to the Stoics, an incorporeal subsists in the way it subsists not in virtue of something else's being, or subsisting, but in virtue of its own subsistence. Just as a body exists as it exists, not in virtue of the existence or subsistence of something else, but in virtue of its own existence.

There is a distinction between existing as a body exists in virtue of its existence, and not of something else existing or subsisting, and existing independently from additional existing or subsisting items. For example, wisdom: wisdom is a body on Stoic doctrine, for it acts by making a person wise;¹¹³ it is therefore an existing corporeal item which it is at least possible to possess.¹¹⁴ Now, as the kind of body it is, wisdom exists, and acts for itself, causing a person to be wise. There is thus a sense in which wisdom can be said to be an independent item, for wisdom is not wisdom in virtue of something else. Yet at the same time there can be no wisdom without a soul to have it.¹¹⁵ There is a sense, therefore, in which wisdom depends on the existence of a soul

¹¹³ Cf. Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.7; Sen. *Ep.* 117.11–12.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.11f.13 distinguishing between a corporeal item, e.g. wisdom, we can possess (ἔχειν), and the incorporeal *katēgorēma* [being wise] which we cannot have, for we cannot possess [being wise].

¹¹⁵ The existence of wisdom and other virtues is described as being an existence 'περί τινα' (cf. Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.9–10), that is to say, wisdom exists in relation to something, namely the soul (cf. Sen. *Ep.* 113.24). Hence the objections to the case of wisdom being an independent thing in COOPER 2014 pp.328–9; see 7.3.2 with nn 41 and 42 below.

to be in, in order to be the kind of thing it is. Similarly in the case of an incorporeal item: for example, the place in which Socrates once stood. It is there as a subsisting place, in one sense independently from Socrates insofar as it subsists as the incorporeal place it subsists as, but in another sense, if Socrates had never existed, that place would not subsist as the place in which Socrates stood.¹¹⁶ There is thus a difference between being the body a thing is, or subsisting as the incorporeal a thing subsists as, and being or subsisting in relation to other items in reality. In other words, the Stoics distinguish between two questions: (i) being real, and thus being constitutive of reality, (ii) being in relation to other real things. Given the systematic, connected structure of reality, every constitutive item in it is in relation with every other item, however indirectly. In the following chapter, question (ii) will be examined in depth to show that, for the Stoics, every real thing is always in some relation, directly or indirectly, with other things. Whereas the analysis in chapter 1 considered the *systema* as a whole, the analysis in chapter 7 will consider the foundation of the *systema* through the complex causal relation which structures the whole ontological framework. Subsisting, obtaining, and existing are factors underlying causation and determined by it. As for question (i), we have so far been mainly focused on it. Our conclusions can be summed up as follows.

The Stoic incorporeals are part of reality: though they do not exist, they really subsist, and in certain cases, really obtain. In this way they are, properly speaking, additional items—additional, in the Stoic system, to natural beings, artefacts, souls, qualities, and virtues, which are all corporeal items; but also additional in comparison to previous and rival ontological systems. Thus the real presence of *lekta* in ontology ensures that they are different items from sounds and words, or mental constructs. It is evident that neither on the Peripatetic nor on the Epicurean view do *lekta*, properly understood as real items, fit in.

Given the distinctiveness and robust account of reality set out by the Stoics in such stark contrast with their rivals, it does not seem plausible that some incorporeals come to be added at a later stage of the development of the *systema*. Since having an ontological status corresponds to a real presence in the world (regardless of the mode, existence or subsistence), it follows that the four incorporeals must be constitutive of reality and necessary to it. Thus the four ‘canonical’ incorporeals are four in number by a constitutive principle of Stoic ontology. That is to say that according to the Stoics, reality is made up of

¹¹⁶ Cf. S.E. M. 10.14: the Stoics distinguish between the distinct place which a body, e.g. Socrates, is in, and that body itself. The Stoics consider that the distinct place is an incorporeal. On the subsistence of a particular incorporeal place, contrasted with the unreality of concepts see BRUNSCHWIG 1988 p.85, explaining the role of the Nobody Argument in this context as a test for particularity.

bodies and exactly these four incorporeals, as all our sources attest.¹¹⁷ Once incorporeals are considered to have a specific status in reality, subsisting as things, it is clear that the ontological framework is constituted also by their presence. Addition or subtraction of an element of this framework will change, if not destroy it. Thus it cannot be the case that there are additional, other incorporeals, in addition to the set list of the attested four, on the original Stoic account.

6.5.2. The Canonical Four: on Surface and Limits

A passage from Cleomedes, which possibly presents (the text is problematic) an alternative list of incorporeals of Stoic inspiration, illustrates the point rather than challenging it. In the passage, an open list of candidates for incorporeality is given, including time, *lekta*, and surface.¹¹⁸ The context is that of wondering to what category of being the extra-cosmic void belongs, which is not a body and thus should correspond to one of the incorporeals from this list. The presence of surface, where we would expect to find place (*topos*), is puzzling. A number of suggestions in the literature have been brought forward to explain this anomaly. A straightforward explanation is that surface is a variant on place, which is the only one of the four canonical incorporeals not to be mentioned in the passage.¹¹⁹ Another interpretation reads Cleomedes' testimony as one which draws attention to the problematic status of surfaces, rather than transmitting a set-list. Indeed, the candidates for incorporeality are set out in an open-ended series of questions (which ends with 'or other things similar to these?'). This indeterminacy contributes to the tentative rather than authoritative tone of the passage, which is part of the discussion of the status of the void. Cleomedes mentions surfaces a few lines earlier to underline the tension between 'our bodies, [which] are limited by a different genus of thing, since surfaces are incorporeal'.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ The four incorporeals are mentioned as a set-list in S.E. *M.* 10.218 and 10.237; Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1116B. Separately, each kind of incorporeal is discussed in various passages as an incorporeal, and there are no other items which are said to be incorporeal apart from them. E.g. the incorporeality of void: D.L. 7.140; Cleomedes *Cael.* 8.12; of time: D.L. 7.141; of place: S.E. *M.* 10.14–15; of *lekta*: S.E. *M.* 8.12 and 8.75.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Cleom. *Cael.* 1.1.141: 'τί ἂν ὄν εἴη τοῦτο; χρόνος; ἐπιφάνεια; λεκτόν; ἕτερόν τι τῶν παραπλησίων;', 'what would this [incorporeal] be? Time? Surface? A *lekton*? Or other things similar to these?'

¹¹⁹ After all, S.E. *M.* 10.34 suggests that limit (*πέρας*) is a place (*τόπος*), the place in which a body is enclosed—though he argues against this view, claiming it is absurd to say a place is a surface. Taking Cleomedes' surface as a kind of place, or place itself, see Goulet 1980 p.186.

¹²⁰ Cleom. *Cael.* 1.1.119–20: 'τὰ ἡμέτερα σώματα εἰς ἑτερογενὲς περατοῦται, τὴν ἐπιφάνειαν, ἀσώματον οὖσαν'.

Brunschwig (1998 pp.28–30), suggests that Cleomedes picks out limits for external reasons and interests from those present in Stoic texts. For in the Stoic corpus, surfaces, though mentioned, are not the focal point of discussion of ontological status: as limits, they are listed as one of the key topics discussed under physics (D.L. 7.132); in that list, they appear after theology and before place and void, though an affiliation to the latter two, in terms of a shared incorporeality, is not alluded to. Posidonius says of surfaces that ‘they are both in thought and in reality’. All further mentions, directly referred to a Stoic or the Stoics in general, are, in fact, definite about one aspect only, namely that surfaces are not bodies.¹²¹ However, as surfaces are never clearly assimilated to place, and rather crop up in discussions about either the difficulty of collocating them or indeed the fact that surfaces seem to be shared by at least two bodies (as noted by Plutarch *Comm. Not.* 1080E), Brunschwig concludes that for the Stoics surfaces belong to the not-something category of mental concepts, rather than to incorporeals. Cleomedes thus would be perpetuating a misguided tradition of interpreting Stoic ontology into a stark division between bodies and incorporeals at large, covering anything which is not a body. This is, from a historiographical point of view, probably the more satisfying interpretation (conforming with the dominant tradition, which has oversimplified Stoic ontology into precisely this dichotomy). It is also the least intrusive, whilst greatly reducing the threat of a Cleomedean alternative list to the canonical four.

For there are serious consequences in taking Cleomedes to be faithfully transmitting a variant list of Stoic incorporeals. Anna Ju (2009 pp.380–6) defends such an interpretation, suggesting that limits constitute a fifth subsisting incorporeal. She relies for this heavily on an interpretation of Posidonius’ definition of surface as ‘both in thought and as subsistent (*kath’ hupostasis*)’ (in D.L. 7.135). She translates (p.382), the second part, ‘*kath’ hupostasis*’, as corresponding to the specific Stoic use of *huphistanai* (and cognates) to indicate the status of subsistence of incorporeals, in contrast with the existence of bodies. The translation I offered above (‘in reality’) is far less committing, and focuses on the contrast Posidonius seems to be making between the mental world and the outside world. In loading with technical signification the quick reference to Posidonius in D.L., all the better to weigh in on Cleomedes’ addition of a fifth element to the list of incorporeals, Ju commits to an extremely strict standard of precise and consistent terminology—and this with regard to both Posidonius and Cleomedes. This means that, according to Ju, whenever Cleomedes uses ‘*huphistanai*’, he is using it to describe subsistence vs existence. She thereby commits to an interpretation of Cleomedes as

¹²¹ S.E. *M.* 9.255; Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1080E; Stob. *Ecl.* 1.14.1e cites Chrysippus saying that surface, like point, place, void, and time, ‘resemble bodies’ and therefore, we are to understand, are not actually bodies.

making an (uncharacteristically) bold shift in ontological framework by allowing for the real presence, i.e. subsistence, of what to all intents and purposes are geometrical abstractions. For it is in that context that Cleomedes makes use of the verb, in particular in a discussion of the latitudinal circles. At *Cael.* 1.1.193 Cleomedes is very clear about the origin of these circles: ‘five parallel circles are drawn (*graphontai*) in the sky’. When Cleomedes takes up the discussion of the latitudinal circles again to explain changes in the weather, he uses the verb *huphistanai* in describing how the arctic circle in particular appears to the person who is walking north from the south, saying that:

the arctic circles enclosing these stars [which are near the pole] will exist (/subsist) (*huphistaínto*) with their slope necessarily changing in accordance with the forward direction of the journey.¹²²

Ju (pp.385–6) isolates Cleomedes’ use of ‘*huphistanai*’ here and reads Cleomedes as making a clarificatory distinction between the limits enclosing the stars, as real subsisting incorporeals, and the moving, corporeal, stars. Cleomedes would thus be describing the behaviour of subsisting circles. But, as noted, these circles are purely theoretical; we ‘draw’ them ourselves to help us measure distance and motion.

There are at least two objections to make, one of method and one, more importantly, of consistency. The first objection concerns the claims about Cleomedes’ use of ‘*huphistanai*’, which Ju deploys to full technical purport, translating the line quoted above as ‘the arctic circles [...] necessarily should subsist [...]’. The term appears only once in the passage concerning arctic circles in which, however, despite the Stoic credentials of the discussion of the constitution of heavenly bodies and the relation between motion and density of celestial matter,¹²³ there is no additional indication that a distinction in ontological category is also being made. Passages from the earlier part of the *Caelestia*, in which the open list of incorporeals appears, in contrast present a more recognizably Stoic background, in which the specification about the subsistence, ‘*hupostasis*’ of the incorporeals, in the technical Stoic sense, is attributed only to void (at *Cael.* 1.1.23 and 1.1.64). There is thus a very clear difference between Cleomedes’ technical explanation of the status of void and the way the arctic circles are described, which weakens greatly the suggestion that the circles, as instances of limits, are shown to have their specific ontological status.

The second objection arises in considering the claims made in the first chapter of the *Caelestia*. Cleomedes defends the Stoic view, against the Peripatetics and the Epicureans, that the incorporeal, subsisting void limits and

¹²² Cleom. *Cael.* 1.3.33–5: ‘οἱ ταῦτα περιέχοντες ἀρκτικοὶ ὑφίσταντ’ ἂν ἀναγκαίως κατὰ τὴν προκοπὴν τῆς πορείας μετεγκλινόμενοι’. I quote the translation in BOWEN & TODD 2004 p.45.

¹²³ See TODD 2001.

surrounds the universe. It therefore appears redundant, if not inconsistent, for Cleomedes to argue subsequently that it is limits themselves, as distinct from void, which are incorporeal subsistent items. In the earlier passage, in which the other incorporeals are mentioned, Cleomedes considers the possibility that void be enclosed by a distinct limit (*Cael.* 1.1.139–41). Thus, he says: ‘we would need another void to enclose the void, and so on *ad infinitum*’ (*Cael.* 1.1.143–5). This would be absurd, he concludes, and therefore the void is unlimited. If, later, Cleomedes would be suggesting subsistence be granted to limits, exemplified by the subsistence of latitudinal circles, he would be contradicting his previous claims by allowing for blocks of void, distinguished by limits, here latitudinal circles.

The context of the passage in question is important. Cleomedes is describing a mental experiment: he begins with ‘let us hypothesize’ (*Cael.* 1.3.22). He then proceeds first to give a physicalist description of what the northbound traveller would see, namely ‘of the stars near the poles, some will go out of sight, others will be always visible’. And then he gives a theoretical explanation about what that corresponds to in terms of latitudinal circles. The choice of *huphistanai* is significant, but not as a marker of ontological status. It rather is a way of distinguishing between the phenomenon the traveller would be experiencing and the theoretical explanation Cleomedes is describing for the phenomenon. The most that can be said is that Cleomedes is not using the verb in the context in which, for the Stoics, it marks off a specific way of being real. Cleomedes thus does not seem to have argued for limits as a fifth incorporeal, distinct from the void.

As Brunschwig notes, the most precious indication Cleomedes gives us about the canonical four incorporeals is that there is indeed a question about limits and surfaces. He never suggests they could or should be assimilated to void. The passing reference to the Stoic incorporeals is not presented as a piece of authoritative doctrine. In other sources the question about surface and limit arises in connection with the question of touch and contact. If limits are incorporeal, then there is an incorporeal between two bodies which are touching, therefore they are not touching.¹²⁴ We have discussed the specifically Stoic frame in which conjunction and contact play a fundamental role in distinguishing what acts and what is acted upon (cf. 3.1.3 above). We anticipated that this configuration is the basis for the complex causal analysis the Stoics develop precisely to ward off counter-arguments of the kind S.E. produces, namely that conjunction leads to a merger of two bodies and the blurring of, precisely, their limits. For the Stoics, contact between two bodies is decisive in individuating each of them, through identifying the activity of the one, and the passivity of the other. In order to do so, the Stoics

¹²⁴ S.E. *M.* 9.255–66; *Plut. Comm. Not.* 1080E; a similar concern is present in *nucleo* in discussions of the infinite divisibility of body according to the Stoics, see *Stob. Ecl.* 1.14.1e.

show that both the active body and the passive body enter into a specific relation with a *lekton*, whose actualization depends on the activity and passivity of two bodies which are in contact. For example, wisdom's activity and the passivity of Socrates' body guarantee the actualization of Socrates' being wise. This will be the subject-matter of the next chapter. The suggestion here, which will be developed through our analysis of the causal relation, is that the limits of a body are in fact determined by *lekta*: where the actualization of a *lekton* ends, that is the limit of the body. The body is thus limited by what it does, or what it suffers, which are states-of-affairs and *lekta*. Thus limits and surfaces, rather than a kind of place, might just as well be classified as a kind of *lekton*.

6.5.3. No Later Additions

None of the four incorporeals could have been added at a later stage in the development of the Stoic philosophical *systema*, for each must have a constitutive role. It has been claimed that, of the four, *lekta* are later adjuncts to the list, on the grounds that the other three are discussed under the topic of physics, precisely as items having roles in the physical constitution of the universe. *Lekta*, in contrast, do not seem to be discussed as elements of physics, but rather belong to dialectic and to a semantic theory developed by Chrysippus (and therefore not foundational). They are 'logical incorporeals', as they are dubbed by Margherita Isnardi-Parente, in contrast to the other three 'physical incorporeals'. *Lekta* would thus not have been considered in the original Stoic ontological set-up.¹²⁵ John Rist advances the claim that originally there were only three incorporeals. Accordingly, the 'doctrine of incorporeals' was founded in physics, and at a later stage was expanded to include *lekta*, which had their origin in Stoic logic and dialectic. Indeed, for Rist and the supporters of this line of interpretation, the Stoic notion of an incorporeal is presented as a precise solution to certain problems arising from the strict identification of body with existence.

The introduction of the incorporeals, in other words, are an admission of defeat from an untenable materialist account of reality. For example, a body must be somewhere, i.e. must be in a place though the place a body is in cannot be said in any way to act or be acted upon, therefore, according to this interpretation, the Stoics could not but make place an incorporeal. Similarly with time, having no causal power, it is nevertheless that which enables causes to come about, i.e. makes possible and encompasses the activity of bodies, therefore time must be incorporeal. The incorporeality of void as well is taken

¹²⁵ RIST 2006 pp.16–17; DUHOT 1989 pp.48–9; ISNARDI-PARENTE 2005 esp. pp.179–80.

as an *ad hoc* solution to the containing of the matter of the world after the conflagration.¹²⁶ The view thus consists not in considering the incorporeals as constitutive, grounding elements of ontology, but rather as items fulfilling certain necessary roles in a world which falls apart if it is to be made up of only corporeal beings. The distinction between corporeals and incorporeals is thus reduced to a distinction which explains, in physics, the particular roles of place, void, or time in relation to bodies. It is the role or the use of these items in the precise context in which a relation to bodies is necessary, which determines their ontological status, and not vice versa. The claim in this book is, of course, that it is vice versa, namely that it is the ontological status of incorporeals which establishes the availability of the incorporeals to fulfil certain functions in the world.

On the interpretation of the incorporeals as gap-fillers in an inadequate materialist account, the earlier or later addition of *lekta* to the class of incorporeals has no particular weight as far as the ontological framework is concerned. It follows, on this view, that *lekta* are added only once they are required, i.e. once their role in a theory of language is developed. From our remaining texts, this seems to have been a question Chrysippus is more concerned with than his predecessors. *Lekta* appear as items invented for, and belonging to, the theory of language, deriving their incorporeality from their use in that context, as the contents of corporeal expressions.¹²⁷

However, *lekta* appear in other contexts than that of language, as we have now seen in a wide array of texts and contexts. Moreover, their role in these other contexts, and most notably their role in causation, one of the sub-topics of physics (D.L. 7.132), is fixed before the Stoic theory of language is developed, since fundamental questions about the individuation of bodies rely on causation. The textual evidence thus supports a different view about incorporeals. For one, the presence of *lekta* as incorporeal items is repeatedly attested alongside the other three. Secondly, the main reason for a late addition, namely that *lekta* are not discussed in physics, is not supported by the texts. Rather, the incorporeals are constitutive of reality in such a way that in virtue of the kind of ontological status they have, they can play various roles, which bodies cannot. Crucially, as incorporeal items, all four incorporeals have the

¹²⁶ Cf. further ISNARDI-PARENTE 2005 p.177; also HAHM 1977 p.25 n.24 on the Stoic incorporeals as 'face-saving' devices. These explanations, in addition to being far too compressed, are also, as they stand, not precise enough: e.g. to speak of the void as 'containing' in the manner of a receptacle (Isnardi-Parente) is to ignore the many texts which report the Stoic view about the tenor of the universe, which is that which holds it together and not the surrounding void, as explained by Cleomedes, *De Motu* 10.27–12.4, who talks about the substance of the universe 'protecting itself by its own means' ('δυνάμει χρωμένη συντηρεῖ ἑαυτήν'); see also Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1054E on the 'structure' ('σύνταξις') of the universe as responsible for its motion, and not its relation with the surrounding void.

¹²⁷ E.g. ISNARDI-PARENTE 2005 p.179: 'when we say that it "cuts" or "burns", it is incorporeals which we express by these words: they are simply predicates (*katēgorēmata*) and nothing else'.

same status. True enough, as we noted from the start, there is a sense in which *lekta* stand out from amongst the set-list of four: not because they have a different way of being incorporeal, but rather because they are the most idiosyncratic items from the list. Unlike time, place, and void, which are acknowledged across the schools of thought as incorporeal (though, as we have seen, each school understands ‘incorporeal’ differently), the *lekta* are the specific contribution of the Stoics, as the Ideas are of Plato (cf. 3.3.2 above). Their role in the theory of causes is not disconnected from the role they have in dialectic and epistemology (in which, in assenting to the content of an impression, we assent to a *lekton*), nor from the role *lekta* play in the theory of action and impulses (in which impulses are said to be driven towards *lekta*). *Lekta* are thus at the heart of a number of the most important questions in philosophy. Their presence in reality is one of the principal characteristics of the Stoic *systema*.

Causation

7.1. THE VALIDATION OF THE ONTOLOGICAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN A BODY AND A *KATĒGORĒMATA*

7.1.1. Doctrinal Consistency about the Foundational Reality of *Katēgorēmata*

According to our remaining sources, *lekta* are not mentioned by the founder of the Stoic school, Zeno of Citium. What Zeno talks about are *katēgorēmata*, the sort of items which can be predicated. He discusses *katēgorēmata* in a context which makes it clear that these are not linguistic predicates but real items, whose reality is distinguished from the existence of bodies and associated to bodies in terms of a relation of an effect to a cause. For a *katēgorēma*, Zeno says, is, (i) that of which a body is a cause, and (ii) the kind of thing that ‘*huparchei*’, obtains, in parallel to, or alongside, the body’s existence:

body is the cause, that of which it is the cause is a *katēgorēma*; it is impossible that whilst the cause is present, that of which it is the cause does not obtain¹

A *katēgorēma* is thus a real item whose status is distinct from that of bodies. The causal relation confirms the ontological distinction by distinguishing, according to the role fulfilled within the relation, between the cause which is a body, and that of which it is a cause, which is real, since it has been caused, but is not a body. The causal relation is described in a peculiar way, such that a body is a cause, if and only if a *katēgorēma* obtains concomitantly to the body’s being a cause. To obtain, *huparchein*, is used in a specialized way to indicate a mode of being real, which is brought about, not in virtue of the existence of a body, but in virtue of something about a body, namely a certain activity of the body which makes the body a cause. That the ontological distinction between the components of a causal relation is foundational to causation for the Stoics

¹ Reported in Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.3–5: ‘τὸ μὲν αἴτιον σῶμα, οὗ δὲ αἴτιον κατηγορήματα· ἀδύνατον δ’ εἶναι τὸ μὲν αἴτιον παρῆναι, οὗ δὲ ἔστιν αἴτιον μὴ ὑπάρχειν’.

is evidenced by all successive figureheads of the school, reaffirming and reformulating Zeno's original schema. Thus Chrysippus states:

And the cause exists and is a body, but that of which it is the cause neither exists, nor is a body²

And Posidonius:

For the cause exists and is a body, but that of which the cause is a cause, neither exists nor is it a body, but an attribute, that is to say, a *katēgorēma*³

Cleanthes, according to Clement of Alexandria, sets out the distinction in terms either of *katēgorēmata* or of *lekta* since:

causes are causes of *katēgorēmata*, or, as some say, of *lekta*, for Cleanthes and Archdemus call *katēgorēmata*, *lekta*⁴

As we can see, the Stoics are recorded, through successive generations, as holding fast both, (i), to an ontological distinction between a body and a *katēgorēma*, or indeed a *lekton*, which is not a body and is contrasted to a body, and, (ii), to this distinction being exponentially articulated through the relation between a cause and what it is a cause of. Claim (i) draws attention to the peculiarity of the Stoic view about ontology, namely that the body and the *katēgorēma*, or *lekton*, are both real. For, as supported by claim (ii), they are both present in reality in the way a cause and its effect are present and real. It follows that there are two ways of being real and present, that of bodies and that of *katēgorēmata* or *lekta* (since, as Cleanthes confirms, *katēgorēmata* are *lekta*). The causal relation attests to this in that it captures, at least for as long as the relation holds (which depends on the continued activity of the cause), the double reality of two, perforce, distinct things, a body and a *katēgorēma*. In no way, however, is there a suggestion that the one has a superior mode of being real to the other. And if there is a question of dependence, it is a reciprocal dependence, such that for a body to be a cause, there needs to be a *katēgorēma* there to obtain. And vice versa, for a *katēgorēma* to obtain, there needs to be a body which becomes a cause—which involves a body's acting in some way.

² Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.12–13: 'καὶ τὸ μὲν αἴτιον ὄν καὶ σῶμα, <οὐδὲ αἴτιον μήτε ὄν μήτε σῶμα>'. The text is emended by Wachsmuth, and kept by von Arnim. But BOBZIEN 1998 p.198 suggests: 'καὶ τὸ μὲν αἴτιον ὄν καὶ σῶμα, <οὐδὲ αἴτιον μὴ ὄν καὶ κατηγορήματα>', which emphasizes more clearly the parallel with Zeno by stating that what the cause is of, is a *katēgorēma*; this lessens, however, the pedagogical emphasis that what does not exist is not a body. The intent, on either reading, however, is the same: the ontological contrast between a body and an incorporeal *katēgorēma*.

³ Cf. Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.18–19: 'καὶ τὸ μὲν αἴτιον ὄν καὶ σῶμα, οὐδὲ αἴτιον οὔτε ὄν οὔτε σῶμα, ἀλλὰ συμβεβηκός καὶ κατηγορήματα'.

⁴ Clement *Strom.* 8.9.26.4: 'κατηγορημάτων ἢ, ὡς τινες, λεκτῶν (λεκτὰ γὰρ τὰ κατηγορήματα καλοῦσιν Κλεάνθης καὶ Ἀρχέδημος) <αἴτια> τὰ αἴτια'.

Before going into the detailed examination of the causal relation, it is worth emphasizing the manifest enduring concern within the Stoic school to affirm and reaffirm the ontological distinctions brought out in the account of causation, as a pillar of ontological structure. It is this concern which is retained in the different doxographical reports, which characteristically highlight the most salient doctrinal features of one school compared to the others. Thus the doxography underlines both the consistency across the generations of Stoics and the peculiarity of their position: namely that Stoic ontology contains things which are real, though some as existing bodies and some as *katēgorēmata*, or *lekta*; this is exemplified primordially in the Stoic account of causation, in which a cause causes the obtaining of a *katēgorēma*.

That the causal relation, on Stoic doctrine, is analysed in terms of a cause, what it is a cause of, and what it is a cause for, is confirmed in parallel sources, in texts which are not historiographical but rather analytical and critical of Stoic doctrine as a whole. Thus S.E. refers to the Stoics and their causal theory, according to which:

every cause is a body which is the cause to a body of an incorporeal⁵

This extract and its broader context report what is clearly a standard formulation, which characterizes the Stoic theory of causation as a three-tiered relation associating an active body, a passive body, and an incorporeal *katēgorēma*. We shall be discussing this passage and others throughout this chapter. But here it serves as a backdrop to the developmental story, which the doxographical testimonies seem to hint at. From Zeno, to Chrysippus, to Posidonius, the three Stoics mentioned in the report in Stobaeus on Stoic causation, the additions which each philosopher brings to the original Zenonian formula are not modifications of the original claim, but merely make explicit certain aspects which are implied in it. Thus, for example, the distinction Zeno makes between the ‘existence’ (*pareinai*), of the cause and the ‘obtaining’ (*huparchein*) of the *katēgorēma* is expanded upon by Chrysippus and Posidonius in their insistence that existence is for bodies alone, thus emphasizing that the distinction consists in the cause existing because it is a body and the *katēgorēma* not existing, and not being a body. Indeed, if there is one aspect which Chrysippus and Posidonius emphasize in particular, it is that there is a distinction between the question of causation and the question about what there is. For causation, on the Stoic account, makes use of the distinction between a body and an incorporeal *katēgorēma*—it is based on it—but the distinction is there, independently from the causal analysis. Thus, note the expletive ‘*kai*’ present in both reports for Chrysippus and Posidonius

⁵ S.E. M. 9.211: ‘οἱ Στωικοὶ μὲν πᾶν αἴτιον σῶμά φασι σώματι ἀσωμάτου τινὸς αἴτιον γίνεσθαι’.

(translated above as ‘And’, and ‘For’ at the start of each sentence), which indicate that there are bodies and incorporeal *katēgorēmata*, because that is how things are.

7.1.2. What Comes First: the *Katēgorēma* or the Cause?

Answer: Wrong Question

It is clear, when looking at the standardized account as it is set out in S.E., that the key feature of the Stoic account is that it brings to bear in what way a body relates to an incorporeal *katēgorēma*. The causal relation is thus an articulation of the relation between a corporeal cause and a real, incorporeal, *katēgorēma*, as formulated by Zeno. There is thus no doctrinal development from Zeno onwards. What there is, in the successive elaborations of the view, is the marked indication that the ontological distinction between bodies and *katēgorēmata*, on the one hand, and the causal theory, on the other, each stand for themselves. That is to say that there is, on the one hand, the reality of bodies and *katēgorēmata*, distinguished from them, and on the other hand, the causal theory—the *katēgorēmata*, in other words, are not conjured into reality for the sake of filling in a gap in causation, but they are there, to be caused. At the same time, it is foundational to Stoic doctrine that the causal analysis mobilizes the ontological distinction; for it captures the relation between bodies and *katēgorēmata*. In so doing, it captures a foundational feature of the logical structure of reality. Every cause is the cause of something, and that something is an incorporeal *katēgorēma*, which obtains, necessarily, since it is being caused. This firmly roots the presence of *katēgorēmata* as foundational in Stoic ontology—rather than considering *katēgorēmata* as *ad hoc* solutions to a topical problem arising in the causal account.

But does this suggest that, at the origins of the account, for Zeno, *katēgorēmata* are present in reality if and only if they are caused? Does Zeno, in other words, envisage the reality of only obtaining *katēgorēmata*? It would then be at a later stage (but no later than Cleanthes), that an account of *katēgorēmata*, and *lekta* in general, which do not obtain but only subsist (in which are included, for instance, false propositions⁶), would be properly articulated.

That Zeno would have only considered *katēgorēmata* which obtain is refuted, firstly, by the previous point, namely that Zeno distinguishes the analysis of the causal relation from the identification of its constituents. Bodies

⁶ See S.E. M. 8.85: ‘φασὶ γὰρ ἀληθὲς μὲν εἶναι ἀξίωμα ὃ ὑπάρχει τε καὶ ἀντίκειται τινι, ψεῦδος δὲ ὃ οὐχ ὑπάρχει μὲν ἀντίκειται δέ τινι’, ‘they say that a true *axiōma* is that which obtains and is the contradictory of something, and a false proposition is that which does not obtain and is the contradictory of something’.

and *katēgorēmata* are present in reality, distinct from their respective roles in the causal relation—which enables them to be, respectively, available to fulfil these roles. Secondly, there is enough textual and contextual evidence attesting that Zeno must have discussed modality. He was, after all, an erstwhile student of Diodorus Cronus (cf. D.L. 7.25), whose famous Master Argument sets out the conditions for necessity with an argument about what is possible and what is impossible, in terms of true or false propositions.⁷ Though Zeno himself is not credited with views about these questions, his student Cleanthes is, expressing disagreement with Diodorus.⁸ In addition, Cleanthes and Sphaerus, both students of Zeno, wrote books on *katēgorēmata* (D.L. 7.175 and 178 respectively). The context of debate in which Zeno founds the Stoa is rooted in the discussions initiated within the Megarian and Dialectical schools—one of whose founding fathers is Clinomachus, a student of Euclides of Megara, who was ‘the first to have written about *axiōmata*, *katēgorēmata* and the like’.⁹ This is enough to suggest a context of discussion in which *katēgorēmata* which obtain, and *katēgorēmata* which fail to obtain, are taken into account, for example because it is impossible that a certain *katēgorēma* should obtain in relation to a certain body because, for example, the corresponding state-of-affairs turns out to be impossible. It is thus in-built in the view of causation Zeno describes that there subsist *katēgorēmata* which obtain if and when a body becomes the appropriate cause for that to occur; but *katēgorēmata* can subsist, uncaused, and constitute the impossible states-of-affairs envisaged, for instance, in the Master Argument, but also subsist as the opposite of the *katēgorēma* that obtains

⁷ In the Master Argument, Diodorus Cronus puts forward a set of premisses to ultimately prove that nothing is possible which is not now true, nor will be true; see Epictetus *Disc.* 2.19.1 and discussion in the following pages. On the influence of Diodorus on Zeno and the first generation of Hellenistic philosophers, and beyond, see SEDLEY 1977 *esp.* pp.81–3 and, with regard to the Master Argument in particular, pp.96–102; it is the influence of the Argument on the Stoics in general, and not on the pre-Chrysippean philosophers in particular, which is examined here.

⁸ See Epictetus *Disc.* 2.19.2 and 9, and Cic. *Fat.* 14: Cleanthes challenges one of Diodorus’ premisses, namely that all true propositions about the past are necessary, which Chrysippus reasserts against Cleanthes’s denial; see 9.2.6 below with further remarks on Chrysippus’ view of the matter.

⁹ Reported in D.L. 2.112. See FREDE 1974 pp.21–4 with SEDLEY 1977 pp.75–7 on the distinction between the Megarian school and the Dialectical school, of which Diodorus Cronus is one of the more prominent figures. The Dialectical school has Clinomachus as a forerunner (see *Suda* s.v. ‘Socrates’, letter ‘sigma’ 829, 27–33), presumably because of his pioneering work on the logic of *axiōmata*. For this reason it is more likely that Clinomachus is associated, in retrospect, with the Dialectical school (as in D.L. 1.19, mistakenly calling him Clitomachus), rather than himself founding a school of thought rivalling or distinct from what became known as the Megarian school (after his teacher, Euclides of Megara), whose central concern was the analysis of arguments, logical form, and generally the concerns of dialectic; see D.L. 2.107–8 and Ps-Galen *Hist. Phil.* 7.17–18.

7.1.3. From *Katēgorēmata* to *Lekta*: a Developmental Story?

This brings us to the development of the notion, and terminology, of *lekta*. According to our sources, the earliest Stoic philosopher who mentions *lekta* is Cleanthes, the successor of Zeno at the head of the Stoic school. Clement, in the polemical context in which this aside is made,¹⁰ does not say that Cleanthes is the first Stoic to have said *katēgorēmata* are *lekta*. Cleanthes may or may not have been, as far as the reference to him in this text goes. He is mentioned alongside Archedemus (two hundred years his junior) as the representative of a specifically Stoic view of what causes are of: specific both in terms of the peculiar kind of thing, namely a *katēgorēma*, (which is also called a *lekton*), and in terms of its peculiar ontological status, an incorporeal in contrast to the corporeal cause.¹¹ Thus, whether Clement is correct or not in his attribution, the view with which he credits Cleanthes corresponds to the standard Stoic account both about *katēgorēmata*, namely that they are a kind of *lekton* (specifically they are incomplete *lekta*, D.L. 7.63–4), and that *katēgorēmata*, and more generally *lekta*, are what causes are causes of.

Two interpretative options present themselves: (i) that Clement has reached out to a standard summary of Stoic logic in which set classifications of *lekta* indicate *katēgorēmata* as one kind belonging to the overall class of *lekta*—just as we can do today by looking at the introductory passages in D.L. 7.43 or 7.63, in which *katēgorēmata* are listed alongside other kinds of *lekta*. In that case there would be no particular reason, or no particularly good reason, for Clement to have mentioned Cleanthes or Archedemus rather than any other Stoic figurehead. Clement, or his source, would then merely be relying on general Stoic lore according to which talk of *katēgorēmata* is interchangeable with talk of *lekta*—the former being one sub-kind of the latter. But Clement is not merely name-dropping here, since he pursues the discussion by explaining precisely what he means by saying ‘*katēgorēmata* or *lekta*’, since he says that causes sometimes cause things like [cutting] (say)

¹⁰ See more at 8.2.2 below. It is also worth bearing mind from the start that Clement is not composing a history of ancient philosophy here (unlike the kind of doxographical exercise we find in the texts collected by Stobaeus). Clement’s sources are heterodoxical, and most likely compilations in the form of summarized textbooks and manuals of logic. He himself is likely contributing to a debate about causation in a medical context, as argued by DUHOT 1989 pp.211–21 and HAVRDA 2016 intro. pp.32–50 with commentary on these lines at pp.276–80, who suggests a Galenic source for our passage and for the reference to the Stoics.

¹¹ The whole passage in Clem. *Strom.* 8.9.26.1–5 comes as an exposition of different views about causes and what they cause: whether all causes are bodies and causes of incorporeals, or whether principal causes are incorporeal and adjuvant causes corporeal, and causes of incorporeals, and so on, with other kinds of variations on the combinatorial possibilities. The Stoics are introduced as representing one view amongst other combinations of body and incorporeal, e.g. where which causes are bodies and what they cause is incorporeal.

when the cause is a knife, but that sometimes a cause causes a proposition such as [that a ship has come into existence], when the cause is a shipbuilder. This testimony and explanation (on which more below) tend to make us take more seriously both the reference to Cleanthes and Archedemus and the mention of *lekta*.¹²

Thus a second suggestion, (ii), is that Cleanthes specifically speaks of *lekta* as that of which causes are causes of. He could either have been saying what Clement is suggesting, namely that some causes are causes of *katēgorēmata* and some of *lekta*, by which he is indicating *axiōmata* in particular as the kind of *lekton* which is true; or he could have been saying that what Zeno meant, thereby ‘clarifying’ his master’s thought, was that a cause causes a *katēgorēma* to obtain in relation to something. That is to say that a *katēgorēma*’s obtaining corresponds to a state-of-affairs in which something holds of something, and that is a *lekton*. Thus a cause, say the sun, is the cause, not of melting, but of the butter’s melting, or that the butter is melting. A cause is thus, properly speaking, the cause of the *lekton* corresponding to the butter melting. Either way (and we shall discuss the details throughout this chapter), *lekta* are considered to be items in ontology, and not semantic correlates of words.¹³ It would not be the first time Cleanthes is recorded for having expanded and indeed ‘clarified’ the thoughts of his teacher. Thus, followed by successive generations of Stoic philosophers, Cleanthes expanded and explained Zeno’s succinct formulation concerning the goal of life (the *telos*), ‘clarifying’ (*prosdiaarthroun*) the Zenonian laconic original ‘to live in agreement’ (*homologoumenōs zēn*) by adding ‘with nature’.¹⁴ Cleanthes

¹² The mention of Archedemus is more revealing about Archedemus himself than about the development of the notion of a *lekton*. For he is known for a tendency to terminological simplification and reduction of the number of distinctions (perhaps in the wake of his teacher Zeno of Tarsus (on whose wariness concerning meta-philosophical discussions see 1.1.6 above); the tendency is evident for example in Archedemus’ definition of the *telos*, the goal of life, which stands out for its concision, see Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.6a.13–14, Philodemus *Ind. Stoic. Herc.*, P.Herc. 1018, col.48, and Schmidt’s entry on Archedemus in PAULY-WISSOWA suppl.vol.XII, col.1358. We learn from D.L. 7.68 that Archedemus (along with other followers of Chrysippus) discussed *axiōmata* by distinguishing between simple and non-simple propositions (rather than as definite, indefinite, demonstrative, etc.). He thus plausibly might have designated all items, which are distinguished as kinds of *lekta* (including complete and incomplete), as ‘*lekta*’ in a spirit of simplification.

¹³ As for example in ALESSANDRELLI 2013 pp.39–43, for whom Cleanthes’ use of the term ‘*lekton*’ indicates that he is introducing talk of the semantic predicate, which expresses that which a cause is a cause of.

¹⁴ In Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.6a.1–9: ‘Οἱ δὲ μετὰ τοῦτον προσδιαρθροῦντες οὕτως ἐξέφερον “ὁμολογουμένως τῇ φύσει ζῆν” [...]. Κλεάνθης γὰρ πρῶτος διαδεξάμενος αὐτοῦ τὴν αἵρεσιν προσέθηκε “τῇ φύσει” καὶ οὕτως ἀπέδωκε: “τέλος ἐστὶ τὸ ὁμολογουμένως τῇ φύσει ζῆν”’, ‘Those who came after him [Zeno], clarified and expanded on this, and expressed it this way: “to live in agreement with nature” [...]. Cleanthes, his first successor, added “with nature”, and gave it the following form: “the goal of life is to live in agreement with nature”’. See also D.L. 7.87–8. The expansions and clarifications undergo increasingly more elaborate formulations, to the extent that, with the first reception of the Greek Stoics, there was already a debate in antiquity on whether there was one or two goals of life: thus Cic.

would thus be engaged in a similar kind of exercise of clarification and expatiation when he discusses causation.

Zeno's original claim contains all the indications that there are items in the world, ontologically distinct from bodies, which are present in reality. Cleanthes' addition, that these incorporeal items are *lekta*, anchors the notion of a *lekton* in ontology. But the ontological fundamentality of *lekta*, and of *katēgorēmata*, does not hang on whether Cleanthes named the *katēgorēmata* Zeno speaks of as '*lekta*', or not. It hangs on whether there are states-of-affairs there, in the first place, for causes to actualize.

7.2. A CAUSE CAUSES A KATĒGORĒMA TO OBTAIN

The distinction Zeno makes between a cause and that of which it is a cause is an ontological distinction. Causation consists in a cause causing a *katēgorēma* to hold, or obtain (*huparchein*). This is a state, or mode of reality, the state of obtaining. It is this state which is shown to be the result of a body becoming a cause. This is peculiar and astonishing. For on this account, the effect which comes about in a causal process is not analysed as an affected body, though only bodies can be affected (see 3.1 above); rather, a cause causes something to become the case, to hold or to obtain. This something is not a body—for a body does not hold or obtain. It is a state-of-affairs, an incorporeal, which the Stoics recognize as an obtaining *katēgorēma*. Obtaining, holding, are terms which we shall be using to capture the force of *huparchein* for *katēgorēmata* and *lekta*. It is worth writing the relation out in formal terms, as the peculiarity is highlighted through the constants 'causing' and 'obtaining', thus:

x causes *k* to obtain

And a complete schema, in which the affected body is also included, reads:

x causes *k* to obtain for *y*

Fin. 3.22 warns of the 'error' of thinking that there are two goals for the Stoics; and Plutarch *Comm. Not.* 1070F attacks the Stoics directly for arguing for two goals of life. In both texts the source for such a development is due to the fact that later Stoics, in particular Antipater, introduce the notion of 'selecting, consistently, what is according to nature, and rejecting what is against nature', illustrated by the image of the archer, 'doing everything in his power to obtain the natural things'. However, as Cicero explains, and as a less prejudiced reading of Plutarch (i.e. less than Plutarch is, in his anti-Stoicism), the notion of selection is itself introduced as a further gloss or 'clarification' of the original Zenonian formula. See STRIKER 1996e pp.300–6 for a tight-knit refutation of the claim for a second, divergent formula, bolstering the view of a unified, though constantly discussed and expanded, account of Stoic doctrine.

The causal relation is thus not equivalent to:

x causes φ -ing for y

Where φ stands for the activity, whichever it may be, associated with the cause's activity. Rather, what is constant in the causal analysis is the obtaining. Causes cause incorporeals to obtain. The sort of thing which can obtain is not a body but a state-of-affairs, *k*, whose obtaining is the real effect of the activity of the cause. It is the sort of thing which, in obtaining, enters into a relation with specific behaviours of bodies, namely to the activity of some x and the passivity of a y. Let us now look at one of the most complete accounts of the original theory of causation, ascribed to Zeno:

(1) Zeno says that a cause is that because of which. That of which it is the cause is a what-has-happened. And the cause is a body, whilst that of which it is a cause is a *katēgorēma*. It is impossible that a cause should exist and that that of which it is a cause should not obtain. (2) This has the following force: a cause is that because of which something comes about, as for example, because of prudence, being prudent comes about, and because of the soul, being alive comes about, and because of temperance, being temperate comes about. For it is impossible that when someone possesses temperance, that person should not be temperate, or that in possessing a soul, a person should not be alive, nor in possessing wisdom, one should not be wise.¹⁵

The passage divides into two main parts: the first sets out the causal schema, the second illustrates it with examples. One claim is made in the text, namely that a cause is a cause of a *katēgorēma*. It is defended: (i) through the characterization of a cause as an existent active body (7.2.1 below); (ii) through the characterization of the *katēgorēma* as that which is ontologically contrasted to the corporeal cause (7.2.2 below); (iii) through the characterization of the ontological structure which is constituted by an interdependence between the existence of a body and the obtaining of the *katēgorēma* which the body is causing by its very existence (7.2.3 below). Thus the ontological framework is the basis which allows the causal schema to unfold, since it has available the kinds of items required (bodies and incorporeal *katēgorēmata*); and at the same time, the very framework is itself constituted by the special relation which binds the cause and the *katēgorēma* it is causing to obtain (7.3 below).

¹⁵ Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.2–10: '(1) Αἴτιον δ' ὁ Ζήνων φησὶν εἶναι δι' ὃ· οὐδὲ αἴτιον συμβεβηκός· καὶ τὸ μὲν αἴτιον σῶμα, οὐδὲ αἴτιον κατηγορήμα· ἀδύνατον δ' εἶναι τὸ μὲν αἴτιον παρῆναι, οὐδέ ἐστιν αἴτιον μὴ ὑπάρχειν. (2) Τὸ δὲ λεγόμενον τοιαύτην ἔχει δύναμιν· αἰτίον ἐστὶ δι' ὃ γίνεται τι, οἷον διὰ τὴν φρόνησιν γίνεται τὸ φρονεῖν καὶ διὰ τὴν ψυχὴν γίνεται τὸ ζῆν καὶ διὰ τὴν σωφροσύνην γίνεται τὸ σωφρονεῖν. ἀδύνατον γὰρ εἶναι σωφροσύνης περί τινα οὕσης μὴ σωφρονεῖν, ἢ ψυχῆς μὴ ζῆν, ἢ φρονήσεως μὴ φρονεῖν.'

7.2.1. The Fuzzy Consensus on Causes being That Because of Which

Zeno describes the cause as ‘that because of which’ (*dia ho*), a formula which, in the second, illustrative part of the text, is expanded into ‘that because of which something comes about (*dia ho ginetai ti*)’. It appears to be the standard Stoic characterization of a cause, referred to by successive generations of Stoics from Chrysippus to Posidonius.¹⁶ What is more, it is referred to in later accounts of causation as the characterization of a cause which meets with consensus across the board of the philosophical schools:

a cause is commonly agreed to be that because of which, in being active, the effect comes about¹⁷

The expression ‘that because of which’ does not in itself mark out a specific understanding of what makes a cause, a cause. Nor does it imply activity, which is why, in S.E.’s consensus-reaching formula, we find the addition of ‘in being active’ (*energoun*), which specifies in what way to understand the characterization of the cause as that because of which. The consensus is thus centred on understanding the expression ‘because of which’ as implying an activity of the cause.

It is worth noting from the start that when the Stoics are reported specifically as characterizing the cause as a *dia ho* (in Stobaeus, as in Clement’s testimonies), they do not add the specification about activity. What is emphasized is the relation of ontological necessity, binding a specific corporeal cause to its necessary specific incorporeal effect, which is the obtaining of a specific *katēgorēma*. The testimony in S.E., however, emphasizes the Stoic contribution to a consensus about the nature of causes, as consisting in the stipulation that a cause be active. This leaves open a list of several kinds of causes which satisfy the requirement of being a ‘because of which’ and active. The claim defended in these pages is that the unicity of the cause is determined, for the Stoics, by the identification of the cause’s effect which is the obtaining of a incorporeal *katēgorēma*. But it is what is the least in need of argumentation for the Stoics, namely that the cause is active (because for the Stoics this is the basic criterion for corporeality: namely that only bodies can be causes, since only bodies can be active), which is the most influential aspect of their account.¹⁸ The privileged status accorded to the active cause hides what is specific to the Stoics,

¹⁶ Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.11: ‘Χρύσιππος αἴτιον εἶναι λέγει δι’ ὃ’, ‘Chrysippus says that a cause is that because of which’. Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.16–18: Posidonius: ‘αἴτιον δ’ ἐστὶ τινος, δι’ ὃ ἐκεῖνο, ἢ τὸ πρῶτον ποιοῦν, ἢ τὸ ἀρχηγόν ποιήσεως’, ‘a cause is of something, that because of which the cause is either the principal cause which acts, or the initiator of an action’.

¹⁷ S.E. *PH* 3.14: ‘αἴτιον εἶναι κοινότερον κατ’ αὐτοὺς δι’ ὃ ἐνεργούν γίνεται τὸ ἀποτέλεσμα’.

¹⁸ It marks out what FREDE 1987c 132–4 calls a ‘change in perspective’ on a large scale, across the board of philosophical schools, reserving the causal capacity to the active bodies.

namely in what way the identification of the unique active cause grounds the relation between bodies and *lekta*. The consensus reached concerns the activity, but not the ontological distinction between body and incorporeal.

In polemical texts, in which many divergent views about causation are set side by side, what is being cleared up are the grounds for the consensus on the active cause, as what is properly speaking 'that because of which'. Both ancient and modern commentators thus note that there is a broad sense of 'because', or 'because of which', such that it can pick out any necessary condition for something to come about, without this thing actively contributing to the effect. The Greek '*dia*' with the accusative, just as the English 'because of', is a general and ordinary way to express a link of causality between a thing and its effect.¹⁹ Plato and Aristotle have recourse to this causative preposition without implying any particular causal configuration.²⁰ In that perspective, Clement notes that something can be 'because of which' (*dia ho*) without actually being a cause, or at least not an active cause. For example, he says, the wood, cut to build the ship, which brought Jason to Colchis, where he met Medea, is a because of which: for had the wood not been cut to make the boat, Medea would not have been able to kill the children she was to have with Jason. But this does not make the wood the kind of unique active cause the Stoics are homing in on. To stress the point, Clement gives a much longer and entangled list of antecedent causes, or more accurately conditions, which have some traceable contribution to the infanticide but no active direct tie. What Clement highlights is that the task of a philosophical analysis of causation is to lift the ambiguities and generalities covering the notion of a cause. Thus:

if something is a cause and it is active, then it is certainly also that because of which, but if something is that because of which, then it certainly does not follow that it is a cause²¹

¹⁹ We do not here go into the discussion about the distinction between an *aitia* and an *aition*, on which two main lines of interpretation run through recent scholarship: the first is interpreted on the basis of Aristotelian considerations, as in FREDE 1987c p.129, as originally a distinction between an explanation (which has a proportional form) and a non-propositional item, which, though not employed by Aristotle, is re-read by Frede into a remark by Chrysippus (in Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.14–15) to conclude that causes, across the board of philosophical schools, are considered as things rather than explanations or conditional statements about causes. The second, following BOBZIEN 1998 pp.199–202, considers Chrysippus' interest in the distinction so as to better identify the active or causal principle at the cosmic level, also called *logos*, or fate, or *aitia*, which is cosmic *pneuma*, from the individual cause, *aition*, which is a part of cosmic *pneuma* but specifically the singular cause of a singular effect.

²⁰ E.g. Plato *Phil.* 26e3–4, at the beginning of the inquiry about causes: everything occurs 'because of some cause' ('*dia tina aitian*'). Aristotle regularly speaks of the '*dia ti*' ('because of') or '*to dia ti*' ('the because of something'); see further BARNES 1990 pp.2668–9 and FREDE 1987c p.127.

²¹ Clem. *Strom.* 8.9.27.3: 'εἰ μὲν τί ἐστιν αἰτιον καὶ ποιητικόν, τοῦτο πάντως ἐστὶ καὶ δι' οὗ, εἰ δὲ τί ἐστι δι' οὗ, οὐ πάντως τοῦτο καὶ αἷτιον', followed by the narrative-style list of antecedent causes to the murder of Jason and Medea's children by their mother.

Clement articulates a set of asymmetric relations between things in general, things which can be causes, and things which are causes. The force of his argumentation comes from the accumulation of things and circumstances, past and contemporaneous to the event, which are then weighed up one against the other in terms of their influence on the event. It thus turns out that by simply being present, a thing is not automatically a cause, neither is it necessarily a potential cause.

We know that this is a well-rehearsed critique to an overly generous, or non-specialized characterization of the cause, thanks to a parallel text from Seneca. Seneca attacks Aristotelians and Platonists²² for relying on a 'swarm of causes' (*turba causarum*, *Ep.* 65.11). The latter consists in a set of conditions whose presence is shown to be necessary for something to happen. We recognize thus in the 'swarm' some of the Aristotelian causes, such as the material or final causes, i.e. the matter from which something is made, and the reason why something is done, but these are joined by other conditions, such as the existence of time and place, which are also considered to be causes for something to occur. The same strategy of heteroclitite accumulation yields a similar result as in Clement: the 'swarm of causes' are not, properly speaking, causes but at best necessary conditions. And this is shown through contrasting the contribution of the various causes. Thus the test for causal efficacy is not only that whose absence prevents the effect from coming about, but that whose lack of a precisely directed activity would prevent the effect from occurring.

The argumentation in Seneca (*Ep.* 65.4–14) constitutes not so much a defence of a Stoic theory on the unicity of the cause as a defence of an argument for the identification of an active cause. For Seneca puts in the mouth of his adversaries the concern to find 'the cause for something's being done, without which the thing cannot be done'.²³ Thus, just as with Clement, the discussion becomes the self-referential defence of a consensus about the active cause, waiting to be revealed. The recalcitrant adversaries in Seneca's presentation are forced to recognize the unique active cause from amongst the candidates proposed. For if they are, as they claim, searching for the cause which both makes the effect come about and without which the effect does not come about, they are forced to settle on the active cause. For it is a thing's activity which makes it a cause, and makes it also the only cause, properly speaking. This is indeed something the Stoics also claim.

²² Cf. SEDLEY 2005 pp.135–6 *esp.* p.136 nn.47–8 on the first-century AD Aristotelians and Platonists whom Seneca is addressing as his interlocutors here.

²³ Sen. *Ep.* 65.11: 'Nam si quocumque remote quid effici non potest, id causam iudicant esse faciendi, pauca dixerunt', 'For if they think that the cause of doing something is whichever thing, the absence of which prevents that thing from being done, they have listed too few'.

For this is the kind of ontological winnowing which the Stoics seem to undertake. Not any kind of thing can be a cause: first it must be the sort of thing which can be a cause—but note that for the Stoics only one thing can be a cause, namely a body, which, alone, is the kind of thing which can act, even if it does not always act. Next, it must actually act. It must do something in a precise way, namely actively bring about something. Only the latter condition is retained on the consensus view, leaving open the kind of thing which can satisfy the criterion for action. Thus there is indeed a set of conditions for being a cause for the Stoics, but the unicity, and indeed activity requirement, derive from a different concern about ontological status, namely what it is to be a body, which is completely by-passed by the arguments about the active cause in the reception or doxography of the Stoic contribution to the consensus about the active cause. The concern for the consensus-reading is to provide a regulated economy, within discussions about causation, to delimit the discussion and protect it from a pullulation of fake causes. The real concern for the Stoics is, as we shall, something else.

7.2.2. Beyond Consensus: the *Only* Active Cause is a Specific Body

Seneca concludes his discussion by seemingly falling back on Stoic doctrine: ‘what we are looking for is the generic cause, and not the innumerable add-ons’ (*Ep.* 65.14), which vindicates the initial claim that ‘for the Stoics, there is only one cause, that which does’.²⁴ But he is only telling one half of the story. The other half is purposely marginalized and is in fact discussed in a different letter, *Ep.* 117. Here Seneca openly rebukes the Stoics for having posited a ‘vacuous and useless subtlety’ (*Ep.* 117.25) in distinguishing the body which acts from the result of its activity. For the Stoics say that wisdom, which is the cause, and being wise, which is the effect of that cause, do not have the same ontological status. The first is a body (it is a quality), but the second is an incorporeal, which is ‘an accident of the first’, and therefore is not a good as wisdom is a good.²⁵

The Stoics are committed—‘shackled’ is the term Seneca uses (*vinculum*, *Ep.* 117.6)—to the view that wisdom and being wise, life and being alive, heat and being heated are ontologically distinct kinds of things. Though Seneca speaks in the letter of the activity of the body, and analyses the status of the incorporeal ‘*accidens*’ as ‘that which depends on the body’, he never explicitly

²⁴ Sen. *Ep.* 65.4: ‘Stoicis placet unam causam esse, id quod facit.’

²⁵ Sen. *Ep.* 117.2–3: ‘si facit, corpus est. Sapientiam bonum esse dicunt; sequitur ut necesse sit illam corporalem quoque dicere. At sapere non putant eiusdem condicionis esse. Incorporale est et accidens alteri, id est sapientiae’, ‘if it acts, it is a body. They say that wisdom is a good; it follows that necessarily they must say it is also a body. But to be wise, they think, does not meet the same requirement. It is incorporeal and an accident of the other, i.e. of wisdom.’

parses the relation in terms of causation. It is clear why: in both *Ep.* 65 and *Ep.* 117 Seneca presents himself as a proud defender of his school's pioneering discovery of the unique active cause. But he rejects the actual grounds on which the Stoics make this discovery, namely on the basis of a distinction between a cause and what it is the cause of. Thus, when it comes to discussing the question of the ontological distinction between a body and an incorporeal accident (which we recognize as the *katēgorēma* from the Greek Stoics), Seneca downplays the causal analysis by masking it under a vague reference to the 'dependence' (*'pendere'*) of the accident on the body, e.g. of being wise depending on wisdom. However, because Seneca commits to the description of a body as that which acts, he is thereby held to acknowledge the distinction between a body like wisdom, and the non-body, being wise. It puts him in a fragile position as far as his own commitments are concerned—we shall see more of this heterodoxical aspect of Seneca's further in 7.3.2 below. Here it is the inconsistencies that Seneca betrays that also enable us to establish just what is at stake with the original Stoic account. Seneca holds on to three claims (which he hand-picks—distorting thereby the original argument—out of an inferential set of premisses from Stoic doctrine): (i) that there is only one cause, the active cause, (ii) that only bodies can act, and (iii) there are such things as *katēgorēmata* (or accidents) which are not bodies.

In so doing he is in line with a certain tradition of reception of Stoicism and also fuelling it, which we have already seen at work with Plutarch (6.4.1 above). Plutarch (*Adv. Col.* 1116B–C) judges the Stoics as more reasonable than the Epicureans because they at least make room for more than just one mode of existence for everything there is. For the Stoics allow for the reality of their incorporeals (time, space, void, and *lekta*). The problem though, says Plutarch, is that the Stoics 'rob the incorporeals of their existence' since the Stoics 'consider them as subsisting and obtaining'. For Plutarch, to subsist and obtain is an inferior status to existence. This is wrong because, for him, the things which the Stoics consider as incorporeals are 'important things' (*'megala pragmata'*) which deserve the status of existence (which, it follows, is a superior mode of reality). For our present purposes, it is not so much Plutarch's views on what incorporeals deserve which count. But what we understand from his critique is that it is the status afforded by the Stoics to the incorporeals which is at stake, just as it is for Seneca. Seneca cannot but accept the ontological distinction between existing bodies and incorporeal *katēgorēmata*, as Plutarch too acknowledges it. Plutarch, who is concerned in particular with Platonic doctrine, casts the Stoics as engaging in a caricatural reverse-Platonism in which the Stoics have retained a two-tiered reality, only instead of the 'important things' being at the highest level, they are at the lowest.

But Seneca is in a different position, one not of overt critique, but of a deft reshuffling of priorities. In his *Letter* 117 Seneca cannot but give an account of

the ontological distinction between a body and a *katēgorēma*, and *lekta* in general (we shall discuss his account in detail in 7.3.2 below). All his subsequent efforts are put into claiming that the distinction is of no actual or pragmatic consequence, precisely because there is no difference between wisdom and being wise. What he therefore brushes aside is the foundational analysis, which is the causal analysis. The analysis accounts not only for the reality of *lekta*, as distinct, ontologically, from bodies, but also for the status of obtaining—the status Plutarch assumes must be an indication of a hierarchy, in view of his Platonizing prejudice that ontologies are structured around hierarchical scales of being.

The real terrain of dispute is therefore the Stoic causal analysis. For that is where the Stoics stand out and remain controversial because of what their analysis proves about the reality of *lekta*. In order not to abandon his affiliation to the Stoic school, Seneca does not enter into the real debate. Instead he reports the clash with the Peripatetics, not about causation, but about the distinction between wisdom and being wise. The Peripatetics claim there is no distinction there to make, because there are no such things as incorporeal *lekta*.²⁶

In the discussions about causation in S.E. and in Clement, where the consensus on the active cause is so doggedly belaboured, the debate is also configured around the disagreement between the Stoics and the Peripatetics on what a cause is a cause of. It comes down, in short, to the Peripatetics rejecting the reality of *lekta* and *katēgorēmata*.

Whereas S.E. (*PH* 3.14–16) does not explicitly name either the Stoics or the Aristotelians, Clement (*Strom.* 8.9.26–8) explicitly presents the views of the Stoics, mentioning by name, as we have already noted, Cleanthes and Archdemus, whom he contrasts with Aristotle. The two passages from S.E. and Clement run parallel, with a similar order of discussion and topics. Both begin by discussing the status (corporeal or incorporeal) of causes, with Clement arguing at greater length for the shared view on the active cause. This is followed by the disagreements about what causes are of (a *katēgorēma* (or *lekton*), or a substance). Both texts finish with a discussion of different kinds of causes: sustaining (*sunektikon*), helping (*sunergon*), joint-cause (*sunaition*) and preparatory (*prokatartikon*).²⁷ The Stoic position is easily recognized

²⁶ Sen. *Ep.* 117.11: ‘Peripateticis placet nihil interesse inter sapientiam et sapere, cum in utrolibet eorum et alterum sit’, ‘The Peripatetics say that there is no difference between wisdom and being wise, since the one is in the other and vice versa’.

²⁷ These terms have Stoic origins: Cic. *Fat.* 41; Alex. *Fat.* 192.18–20; Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1056B; Galen *Syn. Puls.* 458.12–13. As Galen demonstrates in the last passage, they are adopted and adapted into medical contexts. Clement, who goes through a brief description of each, in logical terms, at *Strom.* 8.9.28, (like S.E. at *PH* 3.15), returns to the differences in greater detail in *Strom.* 8.9.32.7–33.9, this time with an explicit application to medical matters; on the Stoic presence in these lines and the appropriation of the terminology into the medical corpus, see HAVRDA 2016 pp.304–11.

in the passage from S.E. thanks to the discussion of *katēgorēmata*. Given the parallel with the testimony from Clement, in view of the closeness in wording and account of the view S.E. presents as opposing the Stoics, this opposing view must derive from the same Aristotelians whose views Clement develops. These texts thus confirm that the debate on what should count as a cause, and what causes cause, focuses around two main contrasting positions, the Stoics and the Aristotelians. In this light it is all the more likely that the Peripatetics whom Seneca puts forward as the opponents of the Stoics about the distinct reality of *katēgorēmata* defend their view within the discussion on the Stoic causal analysis. Thus Seneca mutes the main trigger of the controversy, which is the causal analysis. But covering up the origin of the debate with the Peripatetics merely underlines (i) that the relation between wisdom and being wise, or soul and being alive, is grounded in a discussion about the reality of *lekta* and *katēgorēmata*, and (ii) that their reality and their distinction from bodies is discussed in the context of causation.

7.2.3. The One Cause, and the Others

Once S.E. and Clement broach the topic of the different kinds of active causes they find their way back to common ground after the irreconcilable dispute about the effect of the cause. Thus S.E. (at *PH* 3.15) notes that ‘the majority [of dogmatists] hold’ that there are these kinds (though S.E. singles out the preparatory cause as more controversial at *PH* 3.16). Clement also leaves to one side the polemics about what the cause is of and launches into a discussion of the different active causes, on the assumption that there is a general agreement about them. His discussion then focuses, not on proving their existence, but on the precise scope of each of the kinds. Just as with the consensus about the active cause, this further broad consensus covers some doctrinal compromises which makes it a congenial description of many, but the precise theory of no one.

It also reveals the excess scope left over by the consensus on the characterization of the cause as active. For it turns out that there are still a number of different components without which an effect does not come about, and which all satisfy the requirement of actively contributing to the production of the effect (e.g. consuming wine when one is already sick with fever). This is not the Stoic view, though the origin of the distinctions between the different kinds of causes is traceable back to the Stoics. It rather seems that the discussions reported in S.E. and Clement reflect concerns which derive but ultimately diverge from strictly philosophical or systematic discussions about causes (in either Stoic or Aristotelian contexts). This is presumably due to the absorption into medical discussions of distinctions originally made in other contexts (see n.27 above), witness the examples evoked to illustrate the kinds of causes,

which are for the most part taken from medical contexts (causes for fevers and bone fractures).

In this perspective, in the scholarly literature, one question concerns retracing the Stoic origins and establishing correspondences between these passages and more authoritatively Stoic discussions of principal and auxiliary causes.²⁸ Another question concerns the actual Stoic theory which grounds the distinctions. Another further question is whether the distinctions actually pertain to causation as such, that is to say, to the analysis in ontology of a fundamental relation between the constituents of reality, or whether the distinctions arise out of a different concern. For instance, a concern about two different expressions of causal action: namely causes of qualitative states and causes of changes. As Bobzien shows, it is Chrysippus who recognizes that changes, or motions, will require the identification of an antecedent or auxiliary cause as well as an internal active principle. But only the internal active principle needs to be considered when assessing qualitative states, which are the result of the active principle's acting so as to keep the thing in the qualitative state it is in: e.g. wisdom being the cause of being wise for Socrates.²⁹ Following from this concern a further question arises, namely about determinism through antecedent causes, which in turn raises questions about choice, deliberation, necessity, and possibility. For the question becomes pressing once a distinction is made between a cause which necessitates its effect (the cause which Bobzien identifies as the self-sufficient cause of qualitative states) and the cause which triggers a reaction, though the reaction itself is not necessitated (these are, generally speaking, cases of change and motion). This latter case is the case of the rolling cylinder, which keeps on rolling because of its own internal qualitative disposition to roll, but which would never have begun to roll had it not been for an antecedent push (Cic. *Fat.* 43). The example illustrates a much more serious question about our own moral responsibility, namely whether it is or is not up to us to assent to an impression we could not help but have.³⁰ These questions are highly complex. In fact, as Cicero himself notes (*Fat.* 1), they draw on all levels of philosophical analysis: ethical, logical, and physical (as we noted in 1.1.4 above). But these questions follow from the foundational causal relation and do not illustrate it. Therefore, before we can understand how the Stoics arrive at these questions (as we shall see at 7.5.1 below), we must concentrate on the relation between

²⁸ Thus FREDE 1987c pp.138–43 retraces the correspondences between the adopted-adapted medical notions to Chrysippean distinctions; see also an alternative correspondence grid in HANKINSON 1997 pp.243–51.

²⁹ See BOBZIEN 1998 pp.202–4 and 228 with BOBZIEN 2005 pp.21–3.

³⁰ The tension is set out plainly by Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1056A–B: if the wise man is not the cause of our assenting to the false impression he himself planted in us, because it was up to us to give or withhold assent, the same goes for fate, which is not a determining cause; but then the Stoics can no longer maintain their commitment to causal determinism through antecedent causes.

cause and *katēgorēma*, which is the relation by which both cause and effect are rendered unique and particular.

What is at the foundation of these further considerations is the grounding causal schema, by which the Stoics identify a cause and what it is of. The account, that is, which frames the causal relation as that in which a body becomes a cause and an incorporeal *katēgorēma* obtains in virtue of the body's activity. This relation is the logical skeleton on the basis of which Chrysippus, in particular, brings out the implications in ethics, physics, and logic of the causal relation between the constituents of reality. For he thereby demonstrates more than the mere interrelations of the ethical, physical, and logical structures of the Stoic *systema*, but, properly speaking, their inter-dependence and ultimately unified constitution. For the questions which arise about determinism and the possibility for us of being responsible, despite determinism, for our own choices in life, stem from the basic logical relation which binds a specific cause to a specific incorporeal state-of-affairs, or *lekton*.

There is in-built in the Stoic—and foundationally Zenonian—notation of a cause that its relevant causal activity necessitates the obtaining of a *katēgorēma*. And it is because of this that the specifically Stoic questions arise about the nature of the body and the distinction between the body and its actual activity as a cause (i.e. that a body is not always an active cause, though always has the capacity to become one). Subsequently, this characterization of the cause also frames the distinction between a body and the *katēgorēma* and *lekton*. But what is thus set out is the relation of a cause *x*, causing *katēgorēma k* to obtain for something *y*. Our focus is therefore clear. The investigation into the foundational role of *lekta* leads us away from the questions of distinction between causes and deep into the analysis which supports and grounds the discussions in which those distinctions are developed. For this reason, the question of the kinds of causes is not central to our inquiry; it is derivative on the analysis of the relation between the cause and what it is the cause of.

7.3. WHAT A CAUSE IS OF: STOICS VS. PERIPATETICS

Zeno contrasts the cause as that because of which, with what a cause is of, first designated as a '*sumbebēkos*', a 'what-has-happened'. In the report in Stobaeus, the contrast is then restated as one between a cause which is a body and that of which it is a cause, which is a *katēgorēma*. For the sake of convenience, here is the text again (see n.15 above for the Greek):

- (i) Zeno says that a cause is that because of which. That of which it is the cause is a what-has-happened. (ii) And the cause is a body, whilst that of which it is a cause is a *katēgorēma*.

In the first contrast, (i), the terms used are more common and can be applicable to an array of different views about causation. We have already seen as much with the use of *‘dia ho’*, ‘that because of which’; the use of the term *‘sumbebēkos’* is similarly broadly applicable, with a wide range of connotations across different schools of thought. The second contrast, (ii), restricts the domain of applicability as the terms are more specifically Stoic. The cause as that because of which, is now distinctly characterized as a body, and a *sumbebēkos* is identified as what the Stoics capture with their use of the term *‘katēgorēma’*.

The Stoic view about causes being causes of *katēgorēmata* is opposed, in the doxography, to a view according to which causes are causes of *prosēgoriai*, appellatives. The two views are set out in the parallel texts we have already mentioned. Thus in S.E. *PH* 3.14:

the sun or the heat of the sun is the cause of the wax being melted, or of the melting of the wax. For indeed, they disagree on this question, some saying that a cause is a cause of appellatives, e.g. of the melting, others that it is a cause of *katēgorēmata*, e.g. of being melted.³¹

And in Clement *Strom.* 8.9.26.4:

On this view, causes are causes of *katēgorēmata*, or, as some say, of *lekta* (for Cleanthes and Archedemus call *katēgorēmata*, *‘lekta’*). Or we shall say this—and this is actually better—some causes are causes of *katēgorēmata*, e.g. [is cut], whose case is the [to be cut], and others are causes of *axiōmata*, e.g. [a ship is coming to be], whose case is the [to come to be of the ship]. But for Aristotle, causes are causes of appellatives, such as a house, a ship, a burn, a cut.³²

We shall return to the mention of *lekta* in 8.2.2.2 below. But first we must examine the contrast between *katēgorēmata* and what the Aristotelians are said to designate as appellatives. The contrast, it would seem, should be indicated by the use of a verb to express the *katēgorēma*, here ‘is melted’, and a noun for the appellative, a melting (*chusis*). It is clear, for one, that when the Stoics speak of *katēgorēmata*, they are not thereby speaking of expressions; and secondly, that Clement and S.E. seem to be following Stoic practice here. For the Stoics say that a *katēgorēma* is expressed by a verb or verbal phrase.³³

³¹ S.E. *PH* 3.14: ‘ὁ ἥλιος ἢ ἡ τοῦ ἡλίου θερμότης τοῦ χεῖσθαι τὸν κηρὸν ἢ τῆς χύσεως τοῦ κηροῦ. καὶ γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ διαπεφωνήκασιν, οἱ μὲν προσηγοριῶν αἴτιον εἶναι τὸ αἴτιον φάσκοντες, οἷον τῆς χύσεως, οἱ δὲ κατηγορημάτων, οἷον τοῦ χεῖσθαι.’

³² Clement *Strom.* 8.9.26.4: ‘Εἰς ὃν λόγον κατηγορημάτων ἢ, ὥς τινες, λεκτῶν (λεκτὰ γὰρ τὰ κατηγορήματα καλοῦσιν Κλεάνθης καὶ Ἀρχέδημος) <αἴτια> τὰ αἴτια: ἢ, ὅπερ καὶ μάλλον, τὰ μὲν κατηγορημάτων αἴτια λεχθήσεται, οἷον τοῦ <<τέμνεται>>, οὐ πτώσις τὸ τέμνεσθαι, τὰ δ’ ἀξιομάτων, ὥς τοῦ <<ναυὸς γίνεταί>>, οὐ πάλιν [ἢ] πτώσις ἐστὶ τὸ ναῦν γίνεσθαι. Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ προσηγοριῶν, οἷον τῶν τοιούτων, οἰκίας, νεώς, καύσεως, τομῆς.’ See 8.2.2.2 below on the use of ‘ptōsis’ here.

³³ See D.L. 7.58: a verb (*rhēma*) signifies an uncombined *katēgorēma* (‘σημαίνον ἀσύνθετον κατηγορήμα’). More on this at 9.2.10 below.

In saying that a cause is a cause of a *katēgorēma*, the claim is that what is caused is signified by a verb or verbal phrase. In contrast, the word ‘appellative’ usually designates a kind of expression. That is what appellatives are, listed thus in various classifications in the ancient Grammarians, belonging to the category of common nouns, which also include adjectives (since these do not have their own separate category).³⁴ But presumably the Peripatetics, claiming that causes are causes of appellatives, do not mean to say that causes cause expressions. Firstly, because such a claim is evidently false and, at best, not a theory about causation; secondly because there would be no plausible reason to report such a dispute with the Stoics. However, even if it is not a central point in the discussion about causation, the dispute is relevant enough for both S.E. and Clement to mention it. S.E. and Clement speak of *katēgorēmata* as things and not expressions. The contrast therefore must be a contrast between *katēgorēmata* (things which are expressed by a verb) and appellatives, which are not expressions but what appellatives express.

This is confusing from a Stoic point of view, in which the distinction between a signifying expression and what is signified is crucial. But not so for the Peripatetics, whom S.E. and Clement are echoing, and who place themselves within a tradition in which that distinction is not so clear-cut. Assuming this is the proper way to understand the talk of appellatives here, we must ascertain what it is that appellatives express. From the examples we are given they appear to be the sort of things which, going back to the Platonic distinction between naming and saying (cf. 5.1.1 above), are named, and not said. Thus appellatives are appellatives in virtue of naming something, designating a ship as distinct from a ship’s being built, or a melting, as opposed to being melted.

7.3.1. The *Katēgorēma* is Uncategorizable for the Peripatetics

There are a number of ways to interpret the difference between these views. Frede puts forward an analysis according to which the contrast is set between a process of coming into being which is expressed by a verbal form, and the actual being of an entity expressed by a noun, e.g. between the building of a ship and the being of the ship itself.³⁵ Depending on the kind of view of the

³⁴ The Grammarians take over the Stoic classification of the parts of speech as we find it, for example, in D.L. 7.58. Appellatives are signifying expressions, often classified as a sub-class of names (*onomata*), see Dion. Th. A.G. 23.2; see further on these classifications and their Stoic origin ILDEFONSE 1997 p.370.

³⁵ FREDE 1987c pp.136–7. Frede refers in this respect to a passage from Simplicius, in *Cat.* 301.29–302.15, in which a *poiēsis*, a doing, is distinguished from *poiein*, to do, or something’s doing something, on the grounds that *poiein* stands only for the actual process, whilst *poiēsis* can designate both the process and the end-result, i.e. the product of the doing. It is thus more appropriate, Simplicius notes, in discussing what causes are of, to consider the product, i.e. the

world one has (and what one thinks philosophical analysis is supposed to reveal), there will be a choice between which of these two, process or being, will be considered as what causes are causes of. Thus, as Frede points out, on an Aristotelian view of the world, which is constituted by entities rather than truths about those entities, it is the second option which is preferred, namely that causes are causes of the being of things, which appellatives designate (or in our texts, stand for). On a view more particularly concerned with the causal process which underlies an event, such as the Stoic view, it will rather be the processes which will be considered as what causes are causes of.

This interpretation, however, makes it seem as though the disagreement reported by our texts relies on there being a real choice that the Peripatetics make between one or the other possibility. That is to say that the Peripatetic view is presented as though, in acknowledging the existence of processes, these are discarded as derivative on, and not distinct from entities which may be undergoing processes (e.g. a melting, which is not a substance, but the process that wax, say (which is a substance), is undergoing). In this way, as Simplicius notes in the passage Frede refers to, the existence of processes is dependent on the existence of the substances which undergo them.³⁶ Therefore the difference, from the Peripatetic perspective, between the process and the being of the affected substance is, at best, in the degree of completion, insofar as the being of a substance implies or covers the process of its coming into being. In saying that a cause is a cause of an appellative (i.e. the being of a substance), they do not reject the claim that causes are causes of processes, rather the process is dependent on and implied by the being of the substance. So that the Peripatetic claim, on Peripatetic terms, is the most complete.

The question therefore is whether, in rejecting *katēgorēmata* as effects, the Peripatetics are rejecting processes or something else. It seems that they do not reject processes, since these are implicitly covered by what is designated by the appellative, i.e. the being which is undergoing a process. So the *katēgorēmata* which the Peripatetics reject are not processes. When the Stoics say that causes are causes of *katēgorēmata*, they do not refer to the items the Peripatetics consider to be processes or belonging to the genus of actions. The Peripatetic view has it that causes are causes of substances which are undergoing, or have

entity having undergone a process, as the effect of a cause, rather than the process itself. For Simplicius, however, the distinction is intended to bring out all the better the appropriateness of *poiein*, the pure process, as the genus for action since it unambiguously signifies the process itself and not its result, thus in *Cat.* 301.35–302.1: ‘χρεία δὲ οὐ τοῦ ἀποτελέσματος, ἀλλὰ τῆς ἐνεργείας, ἣν τὸ ἐνεργεῖν σημαίνει μονοειδῶς’, ‘what we want is not the end-product, but the operation, which “to operate” signifies exclusively’ (i.e. as an unmixed kind).

³⁶ As Simplicius in *Cat.* 301.25 states from the start of the discussion: ‘ἢ ἐνέργεια καὶ τὸ ποιεῖν μετὰ τὴν οὐσίαν’, ‘operation and doing come after substance’, in the sense that they are properties of substance (which argues against the possibility of a Stoic reading of this passage, as discussed in 6.3.3 above).

already finished undergoing, some process or other. The Stoic view which is contrasted to this is not, however, straightforwardly the view that, on the contrary, causes are causes of those processes rather than the substances affected by them. This is not to say that the Peripatetic view is not, in fact, based on their having made a distinction between process and product (i.e. affected substance). It is plausible that their view is elaborated on their understanding of this distinction. It is not, however, the distinction which seems to be the basis for the contrast between the Stoics and the Peripatetics. It rather seems that, at least for the Peripatetics, there is no choice to make between substances and *katēgorēmata*, because for the Peripatetics there are no such things as *katēgorēmata*. No *katēgorēmata*, that is, which are real and obtain—whereas the Peripatetics do acknowledge the existence of processes. Thus the disagreement about which item a cause is a cause of seems to be, first and foremost, a disagreement about whether there are two such distinct items at all as what is expressed by appellatives on the one hand, and *katēgorēmata* on the other. And this is something other than a disagreement on a distinction between different stages of an action, between product and process.

The Stoics hold the view that causes are causes of items, *katēgorēmata*, which the Peripatetics consider as non-existent, nothing at all. That is to say, there is nothing which is picked out by a verbal phrase in addition to substances and properties, which, as Simplicius puts it (n.36 above), ‘come after the substance’. Predication, by which we predicate things, (*katēgor-eisthai*), is a notion which belongs to logical and semantic questions, not to ontology. Thus, to say of Socrates that he is ill, on what is, basically, an Aristotelian view from the *Categories*, is a way to express that illness is predicated of Socrates, which articulates a relation of belonging, of a property to a substance. Predication is thus a logical tool by means of which the relation between an object and one of its properties is expressed.³⁷ From this point of view, saying that illness is in Socrates or the property of illness belongs to Socrates, or Socrates is ill, are equivalent. The forms of predicative expressions are interchangeable: ‘for Aristotle—as Alexander explains—looks to the meanings, when the same things are meant, and not to the expressions’.³⁸ This passing critique from Alexander is of course addressed to the Stoics, whom he refers to a couple of lines earlier with the recognizable epithet of ‘the newer’ logicians.³⁹

The Stoics take the alteration of surface grammar, e.g. being in x rather than being x, to establish different ontological categories x and being x. The Stoics thus distinguish illness from being ill. They do not deny the existence of items

³⁷ See Arist. *Cat.* 4, 2a34–b6 and on this FREDE 1987e and MANN 2000 p.192.

³⁸ Alex. in *An. Pr.* 84.16–17: ‘ἀλλὰ Ἀριστοτέλης πρὸς τὰ σημαίνόμενα ὀρών, ἐφ’ ὧν ὁμοίως σημαίνεται, οὐ πρὸς τὰς φωνάς’.

³⁹ See 6.1 n.80 above.

such as illness, but these are considered as the items which can be named (as opposed to being said, in the relevant sense of 'to say'), and are bodies on the Stoic view. It is these items which can be causes. But being *x* is not something named, but something said of, or attributed to, something. It cannot be a cause. The Peripatetic critique repeatedly projects on the Stoics a primordial attachment to language, which leads them to their theories. Thus, because there are different types of expressions (e.g. nouns and verbs), the Stoics supposedly come to posit different things in reality, which these different expressions refer to. But as our investigations proceed, this is surely appearing increasingly unlikely. It is here the Peripatetics who confuse expression and thing with their shorthand use of appellatives to cover substances (undergoing or having undergone a process). The Stoics, by contrast, do not have recourse to semantic or grammatical aspects at all, but find *katēgorēmata* present within the logical structure of the causal relation, because of what turns out to be a strict understanding of what makes a body a cause.

7.3.2. The Distinction between Wisdom and being Wise

We can see how the dispute with the Peripatetics became reduced to a question about the relation of language to things, especially once the peculiarity of the Stoic account of causation is muffled under the general consensus of a cause being active. That is to say, once only the condition of active involvement is emphasized, but no longer the ontological status of bodies. For what is left is the characterization of the effect, which, designated as a '*katēgorēma*' by the Stoics, is easily confusing. It is confusing on two counts at least: (i) because of its seeming proximity with Aristotelian terminology for predication (as a logical and semantic tool), and (ii) because the Stoics themselves will identify *katēgorēmata* as *lekta*, that is, things which can be said, that is, things which expressions signify. From (ii) it then seems that the Stoics associate types of expressions (e.g. verbs) with what they are referring to as *katēgorēmata* and more generally *lekta*. The Peripatetics are then justified in accusing the Stoics of identifying through surface grammar, elements of ontology, since it would seem that the Stoics assign the capacity to pick out real items from ontology to specific types of words.

But, as we have already suggested, these are but seeming consequences, once some crucial aspects about what a body is and what it does are discarded from the discussion. Seneca, as we have mentioned (7.2.2 above), holds a position midway between defending the ontological grounds for the reality of *katēgorēmata*, and at the same time belittling the relevance of the distinction to any 'important' questions, which for him are questions in ethics. He can argue for minimizing the relevance of the distinction whilst defending the theory precisely because (as we suggested above) he suppresses the causal context

in which the distinction between a body, such as wisdom, and a *katēgorēma*, such as being wise, is articulated.

The contrast between wisdom and being wise is often the example we find in Stoic-related texts. It is, as such, a rather problematic example given that it is far less evident that wisdom is the cause of being wise than it is that the sun is the cause of being melted. Yet the Stoics maintain the parallelism. Moreover, the dispute with the Peripatetics about the very grounds for the distinction involves maintaining the parallelism. Seneca reports that the Peripatetics reject the view that there is a difference between to be wise and wisdom (*Ep.* 117.11–12)—a distinction Seneca tells us was first made by the old Dialecticians, and which the Stoics took over.⁴⁰ Seneca reports the Stoic explanation of the distinction on the basis of a comparison with the difference between a field and having a field, which are two distinct kinds of things: (i) distinct insofar as a field is the field it is regardless of anything else in addition, whereas having a field pertains to the possessor and not to the field itself; (ii) distinct as kinds of items insofar as a field is a corporeal entity, a chunk of earth, as corporeal as it gets; whereas having a field cannot be the same sort of thing the field is. It is therefore not a body like the field is, but rather the kind of thing which can be said of or attributed to its possessor. In the same way, wisdom is one thing in itself like the field, and having wisdom (i.e. being wise) pertains to the possessor of wisdom. The discussion is not about language or correct grammar, but rather about identifying constituents of reality and the relation between them. Thus, like the distinction between the field and [having the field], wisdom is a corporeal entity whereas [being wise] is not.

Seneca presents an objection (at *Ep.* 117.14–15): namely that the comparison is unfounded on the grounds that the field is external to its possessor whilst, in the case of wisdom, wisdom is internal to its possessor.⁴¹ The solidity of the objection is dubious, but one thing is clear: Seneca is arguing against the original Stoic theory on grounds which are alien to Stoic discussions but appeal to what Seneca has been referring to on and off since the start of the letter, namely ‘a common opinion’, which is the habitual front raised against the Stoics.⁴² He puts forward that in the case of the field, two different

⁴⁰ See n.9 above on the affiliations of Zeno to the Dialectical School. Seneca’s remark here serves his own agenda: namely that of downplaying the importance of the distinction by showing it up as a somewhat cumbersome inheritance (hence the ‘shackles’ (*vincula*) at *Ep.* 117.6 to say that the Stoics are bound to it, though in fact it has minimal consequence on ‘real life’ questions).

⁴¹ The objection is subject to interpretation: COOPER 2004 p.329 interprets Seneca as considering that a mind which is wise cannot be distinguished as a separate subject from the wisdom which completely structures the mind. But see INWOOD 2007 p.298 who insists more on Seneca’s contrasting what can easily be taken away from its possessor, such as a field, and what cannot be lost in the same way, such as wisdom.

⁴² Sen. *Ep.* 117.6–7 belabours the well-founded ‘*publica persuasio*’ which then serves as the reasonable voice Seneca bolsters throughout the letter against the ‘inane hair-splitting’ distinctions (*Ep.* 117.1 and 25) of the Stoic logicians. In this, he relays the approach fostered in texts

‘natures’ are involved, that of a piece of earth, and that of a human being, whereas in the case of wisdom, one and the same ‘nature’ is involved, since he who is wise is himself his own soul, which is in a state of wisdom. Therefore the cases of the field and wisdom belong to different ‘jurisdictions’, the law in the case of the field, nature for wisdom:

The field is possessed by law, wisdom, by nature⁴³

But this is neither here nor there as far as the Stoic distinction between a *katēgorēma* and a body is concerned. For on the strict Stoic criterion—which Seneca himself reminds us of at *Ep.* 117.2—namely that whatever acts is a body, earth, or soul, or the human body, have precisely the same nature. Thus the comparison between [having a field] and [being wise], for the Stoics, holds as long as the discussion is within ontology; neither is a body, and they stand, as incorporeals, in a precise relation to a body.

As we have noted (6.5.1 above), there is a difference between an item being the kind of thing it is for itself, i.e. having its ontological status, and that item existing in virtue of, or in relation to, the existence of something, such as wisdom existing in virtue of the existence of a soul. The existence of wisdom depending on the existence of a soul is equivalent to a field’s existing by depending on there being earth for it to be in—taking a field to correspond to a certain kind of division of land, the kind that makes it the case that a field is owned by someone. There are certain qualities which characterize an individual field, i.e. makes it the field it is, just as there are qualities which characterize an individual soul, for instance its wisdom. In both cases, field and wisdom are bodies in and for themselves, insofar as they are the uniquely qualified bodies they are.⁴⁴ Thus both wisdom and the field have an ontological status as corporeal entities. They are what they are in themselves, each satisfying the criterion for corporeality, at the very least by giving the thing they are the

whose titles are suggestive enough in themselves, such as Cicero’s *Paradoxes of the Stoics*, or Plutarch’s *On Stoic Self-Contradictions*.

⁴³ Sen. *Ep.* 117.15: ‘Ager iure possidetur, sapientia natura’. On a general tendency in Seneca to transfer questions in logic to questions of law and legislation see MARIANI ZINI 2018.

⁴⁴ It is the individualizing qualities which are states of the bodies which have them. In what is presumably a later stage of Stoic dialectic, of which we learn from Simplicius (*in Cat.* 214.24–30), the Stoics call qualities ‘havables’, *hekta*: a few pages earlier (*in Cat.* 209.14–15) Simplicius reports that it is the Platonists who first introduce the term for what the Stoics call ‘*hexis*’. He thus documents stages in a debate in which the Stoics presumably appropriate the term to themselves (on this see SEDLEY 2005 pp.118–20) and readjust it to their notion of a *hexis*, namely to indicate the results of the activity of the *hexis*, which individualizes and ‘unifies’ a body: ‘τὰς γὰρ ποιότητας ἐκτὰ λέγοντες οὗτοι ἐπὶ τῶν ἡνωμένων μόνων τὰ ἐκτὰ ἀπολείπουσιν’, ‘they call havables, the qualities; havables exist only for unified things’ (Simpl. *in Cat.* 214.26–7). The point Simplicius is making is twofold: first that qualities are states of the bodies that ‘have them’, secondly, and more particularly, that ‘having’ them, in this strong sense, determines the unity or cohesion of the body from the individual to the cosmic level, as discussed in 1.3.5 above. A quality is thus the state a body is in thanks to this body’s having or possessing the quality.

qualities of its individual unity.⁴⁵ On these terms, wisdom, just like a field, is an independent corporeal item despite Seneca's attempt to dismantle the comparison, which he himself sets out. For Seneca defends the Stoics against the Peripatetics in this way. The Peripatetics deny the reality of anything apart from these qualities, which the Peripatetics do not consider to be corporeal entities but properties belonging to substances. Against their view, Seneca brings out a contrast between the kind of independent mode of being of a field and of wisdom, and what it is to have wisdom, or to have a field.

7.3.3. A Category Distinction

The contrast is not between the independent status of wisdom and the field, and the dependent status of having wisdom or having a field: the relation is more complex. It is a relation which lacks a single common basis. For though having a field, like being wise, 'have a connection' ('*contingit*' *Ep.* 117.12) to the field and to wisdom (respectively), they 'pertain' to something else, namely to the owner of the field and the wise person (respectively). There is thus a category distinction:

the field is one thing, having a field is something else⁴⁶

Against the Peripatetics, Seneca upholds the Stoic view that having a field or being wise are real things with a status governed by a distinct set of criteria supporting their ontological status, distinct from bodies. The distinction cannot *not* be acknowledged once wisdom, or a field, are understood as distinct corporeal entities.

It is thus the initial commitment to the corporeality of wisdom, on the terms set out by the Stoic analysis of the criteria for corporeality, which necessitates the distinction between two different kinds of things: bodies and incorporeal things, which Seneca moves swiftly on to call 'things said of bodies' ('*enuntiativi*' *Ep.* 117.13). We shall examine further (in 8.1.2 below) Seneca's attempts at translating the Greek term '*lekton*', since '*enuntiativum*' is of course one such

⁴⁵ See Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1054A–B: 'τὴν ὕλην ἀργὸν ἐξ ἑαυτῆς καὶ ἀκίνητον ὑποκείσθαι ταῖς ποιότησιν ἀποφαίνουσι, τὰς δὲ ποιότητας πνεύματα οὐσας καὶ τόνους ἀερώδεις, οἷς ἂν ἐγγένωνται μέρεσι τῆς ὕλης, εἰδοποιεῖν ἕκαστα καὶ σχηματίζειν', 'they say that matter is inert of itself and provides an unmoving substrate for qualities; the qualities being bits of *pneuma* (breath) and air-like tensions, come to be in parts of this matter, and give individual character and shape to each'. The terminology here is a mixture of Stoic and middle-Platonist appropriations of Aristotelianisms, but the main point is clear enough: *pneuma* acts on matter to parcel it out into individual unique things, and thus corresponds to the individual qualities of the thing. See in this respect a remark from Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 882F: 'Οἱ Στωϊκοὶ πάντα τὰ αἷτια σωματικά· πνεύματα γάρ', 'for the Stoics, all causes are corporeal, because they are *pneuma*'. See on this KUPREEVA 2003 pp.302–4.

⁴⁶ Sen. *Ep.* 117.12: 'Aliud est ager, aliud agrum habere'.

attempt. For now we will focus on the ontological distinction which Seneca himself concludes is impossible to reject: 'I think you will have to concede that there are two different things involved'.⁴⁷

The contrast with the Peripatetics about the characterization of the effect of causes not only grounds a different view of ontology but transforms the very purpose of causation. For causation, on the Stoic account, no longer reveals why or how something exists, but what has happened to it. From the very foundations of Stoic logic, Zeno sets out the causal relation as framing a certain state of reality. From one point of view the cause is simpler than on the rival accounts, because it is single and uniquely marked out. From another perspective it is more complex, since it governs two levels of necessity: the obtaining of the *katēgorēma* and concomitantly the passivity of the affected body, where the one depends on the other and vice versa. The state of reality that the causal relation thus marks out has an internal complexity: it determines the obtaining of an incorporeal *lekton*, distinct from the cause that caused it; but in obtaining (which implies the activity of a cause) a passive body has also been put in a relation with the *katēgorēma*. It is this internal complexity which lays the structural basis for the Stoic account of an *axiōma*, and which is therefore conceived entirely in terms of ontological structure. We shall put off discussing *axiōmata* as such until chapter 8, for there are further stepping-stones to put in place within the investigation into the complexities of the ontological structure leading to that discussion.

7.4. COMPLEXITIES AND RELATIONS: THE *KATĒGORĒMA* AND THE CONJOINED PAIR

Zeno first characterizes what a cause is a cause of as a *sumbebēkos* (Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.2), literally translated as a what-has-happened. The term is familiar from Aristotelian contexts in which it conveys, generally speaking, what is accidental in contrast to what is essential. But the usage is not fixed or restricted to those contexts, since Epicurus, as we have seen (in 6.4.2 above), adopts it for his own purposes to indicate properties. Zeno thus draws on some generic connotations of the term without calling out any of his philosophical rivals. He appeals to a basic, literal, sense of the perfect participle form of the verb '*sumbainein*', 'to happen', before substituting it with the more peculiar Stoic term, '*katēgorēma*'. The latter also has lexical roots in a terminological constellation created by Aristotle. For it is Aristotle who first uses the verb '*katēgorein*', which standardly means 'to accuse', in a logical context

⁴⁷ Sen. *Ep.* 117.12: 'Puto, concedes duo esse haec ...'

of ascribing a true predicate to something.⁴⁸ But the Stoics do not speak of a predicate (*katēgoria*) but coin their own morpheme, distinct from Aristotelian connotations. The claim put forward in these pages is that the Stoic analysis of causation is an important, possibly the original, context, in which the distinctive traits of the Stoic *katēgorēma* develop. The recourse to the literal connotations of the notion of a *sumbebēkos*, a what-has-happened, establishes the distinction between the thing the cause is and the thing the effect is; but it also establishes a necessary relation between the *sumbebēkos/katēgorēma* and an affected body.⁴⁹ For contained in the notion of what-has-happened, is a reference to the affected body: it is what has happened to something. The *katēgorēma*, by holding its own ontological status, thereby stands in two different kinds of binding relations, one to the cause, the other to the passive body.

Cicero first translates in Latin what a cause is a cause of as an '*eventus*'—the term that gives us 'event' in English, and which should allow us also to speak of events in this context. However, as we shall see, the notion Cicero belabours is distinguished in ways which differ enough from twentieth-century talk of events for us to resist doing so and be wary of a misleading amalgamation. For '*eventus*' covers both an internal complexity and a set of relations which capture the structure in which the *katēgorēma* obtains. There is a build-up leading to the introduction of the term: Cicero refers first to the strict understanding of a cause as that which necessitates the effect:

that which, once that of which it is the cause has accessed it, comes about necessarily⁵⁰

That is, once a certain body *x* is put in a position *P*, *x* cannot but become the cause of *F* (i.e. the specific effect *x* causes in *P*). Position *P*, which here Cicero sets out as an 'access' condition, is explained in more detail thanks to an example (that of dying by snakebite for Philoctetes). A cause is accessed and thus activated once it is in close proximity with that on which it acts, i.e. that to which it is conjoined, such that its effect comes about. It is therefore the snake, in the example, which is the cause of Philoctetes' dying once the snake comes in proximity with Philoctetes. In Cicero's words:

the cause was more closely connected and conjoined to his death⁵¹

Cicero compares the cause the snake is, to a set of reasons and conditions, including why Philoctetes got marooned in Lemnos (where it happened) in the first place. These distinctions between necessary conditions and the actual

⁴⁸ See FREDE 1987g p.32. More on this in 7.6.1 below.

⁴⁹ See 7.6.3 below on the *sumbebēkos/katēgorēma* substitution.

⁵⁰ Cic. *Fat.* 36: 'id quod cum accessit id cuius causa est efficit necessario'.

⁵¹ Cic. *Fat.* 36: 'causa fuit propior et cum exitu iunctior'.

unique (active) cause anticipate the causal winnowing we saw in the *Stromata* passage in Clement (7.2.1 above). But where, for Clement, the decisive factor was the activity of the cause and the broad consensus over it, Cicero is much closer to specifically Stoic concerns. He zeroes in not on the activity but on the conditions for a specific kind of activity, bringing together what we in fact recognize as the criteria for conjunction that we discussed in depth earlier (3.1.3.2 above). These are: proximity and conjunction. Proximity is described as a specific physical closeness which triggers an activity in one body and necessitates a passivity in another. As such, the effect ‘properly belongs’ (this is Cicero’s use of ‘*propior*’) to a specific pairing of bodies. As for conjunction (or being conjoined, ‘*iunctior*’), it is identified as the stage at which the proximity of a body *x* to another *y*, which necessitates *x* to be a cause for *y*, crystallizes one of the possibly many activities *x* is capable of, since *y*’s capacity for a certain passivity determines *x*’s activity. Thus, in conjunction with a human body, the snake becomes the cause of biting. Proximity and conjunction set out the conditions for actualization of what Cicero then calls an ‘*eventus*’.

There is therefore a logical principal (*ratio*) which reveals the cause of an event⁵²

The ‘*ratio*’ is a logical principle or rationale which holds together the unique and necessary relations binding a cause to what triggers its activity (the passive body), and thereby determines the effect. What Cicero is thus pointing out is that, given the stringency of the relations, at any stage of the causal process the other elements involved can be deduced. There is a logical principle structuring the event such that the latter can be broken down into its components. For every *eventus*, there is necessarily one and only one cause whose effect is a precise state-of-affairs, which comes about in virtue of the conjunction between a specific active body and a specific passive body.

The rationale, or *ratio*, implies that there is a principle governing an inter-relatedness between the components of the causal relation such that each entails the other. It also implies an order, not only an order which structures the whole process, but an order which each component imposes on the other, by imposing on each its precise role. For it is by its becoming passive that the affected body necessitates that the cause causes the effect to come about; and by obtaining, the effect (the obtaining *katēgorēma*) imposes its role on the affected body.

S.E. sometimes refers to the ‘Dogmatists’ or ‘some Dogmatists’ who say that ‘causes are relatives’ or that ‘they belong amongst the relatives’.⁵³ The cause, he

⁵² Cic. *Fat.* 37: ‘Ratio igitur eventus aperit causam’, reading the ms. ‘*aperit*’ (kept by YON 1933 and SHARPLES 1991) which gives a satisfactory general validity to the statement rather than an anecdotal comment on the previous example as the perfect ‘*aperuit*’ would suggest, conjectured by Rackham in the Loeb edition of 1942.

⁵³ E.g. S.E. *M.* 9.207–8: ‘τὸ αἴτιον τοῖνυν, φασί, τῶν πρὸς τι ἔστί· τινὸς γάρ ἐστιν αἴτιον καὶ τινί, οὐκ τὸν σμιλλίον τινὸς μὲν ἐστιν αἴτιον καθάπερ τῆς τομῆς, τινὶ δὲ καθάπερ τῇ σαρκί’, ‘The cause

says, is relative to that of which it is a cause and that for which it is the cause. It is not too difficult to see how these particular Dogmatists could be identified with the Stoics.⁵⁴ For at the basis of what Cicero describes is a configuration bound together by mutually implicating relations: a body becomes a cause necessarily, with respect to what it is conjoined to. The cause according to these Dogmatists, S.E. insists, is always a cause of something and for something. Elsewhere (*PH* 3.16) S.E. condenses the claim, saying that 'a cause is relative to something which obtains, i.e. to its effect'.

It is not that this is an incorrect characterization of a cause for the Stoics. But it is also an undeniably bland and generic characterization. The radical distinction, for the Stoics, between cause and effect is not captured by the generic reference to the relativity of the cause, because relativity is too vague to identify the specific configuration by which an active body is conjoined to a passive body. For there are at least two different ways in which the *katēgorēma* is a relative: one is the relation of the *katēgorēma* to the cause, the other to the passive body; these relations are asymmetric. They are, what is more, necessarily different enough one from another, that the active and passive bodies are uniquely characterized through these relations. The critique from indistinctness (3.1.3.2 above) is dispelled in view of this asymmetric relation to the *katēgorēma*. The configuration of the causal schema is thus far more complex than a mere relation of relativity of the cause.

S.E. retreats to a generic level of description of the cause, which fits a large pool of different schools rather than the Stoics in particular. He thus reaches a similar degree of consensus as when describing the cause as necessarily active.⁵⁵ In fact, any theory which emphasizes the activity of the cause will

thus, they say, belongs amongst the relatives; for a cause is of something for something, like a scalpel is the cause of something, namely the cut, and for something, namely the flesh'. Note that the example for what a cause is of, is an entity, the cut, expressed by a noun, and not a *katēgorēma*, which is an indication that this is not a specifically Stoic context. S.E. makes the same point later at *M.* 9.239 and in *PH* 3.16 and 3.25. The characterization of causes as relatives seems to be a hobbyhorse of the Sceptical school; see D.L. 9.97–8.

⁵⁴ See BOBZIEN 2005 pp.19–21.

⁵⁵ For a similar conclusion, see DUHOT 1989 pp.220–1. It is also worth pointing out that a further indication of the level of generality of S.E.'s talk of causes as relatives is that, for the few texts we have at our disposal on the topic, the Stoics do not discuss relatives, or the category of the relative (*ta pros ti*) in terms of causes. The most important testimony we have on relatives in Stoicism, in *Simpl. in Cat.* 166.15–29, makes no mention of causes. True enough, the examples given there for relatives are intriguing: disposition (*hexis*), knowledge (*epistēmē*), and perception (*aisthēsis*) at *in Cat.* 166.21, since at least for disposition and knowledge, these are the kind of causes we are examining; thus MENN 1999 pp.230–1 makes this connection. However, the context in Simplicius, in which relatives are being distinguished from relatively disposed (*ta pros ti pōs echonta*) is very different: the concern is chiefly focused on whether a relative state is differentiated from that in which it is or not (so the focus is *not* on what way a relative is relative to something external, which makes it a relative in the first place, and which would be the causal association noted in S.E.), see on this MIGNUCCI 1988. It therefore would seem that the Stoics come to think of relatives in a rather specific context: that of individuating qualities and virtues in

also consider causes as relatives, insofar as what picks out the cause as a 'because of which' is its necessary relation to the effect. It is not surprising, therefore, that when S.E. illustrates with an example, what he understands by a cause being a relative, he gives the example of a cause being a relative to an appellative (from the Peripatetic account) and not of a *katēgorēma* (cf. n.53 above: 'the scalpel is a cause relative to a cut, and not to being cut'). This is not a mistake, but precisely what S.E. is intent on achieving: a unifying characterization of the cause as relative, which provides him with a clear target for the subsequent critique of the Dogmatists and the arguments developed against causes and the very possibility of there being any causal relations.⁵⁶ S.E. crystallizes the shift from setting out necessary conditions to identifying a binding cause as a relative—all the better to move towards a standardization of the causal schema. This detracts from the real specificity of the Stoic analysis, in which saying that a corporeal cause is relative to an incorporeal *katēgorēma* is but the beginning of a series of difficulties and questions, rather than a helpful characterization.

The '*eventus*' which Cicero refers to is a complex and hybrid thing: it contains an incorporeal *katēgorēma*, at the same time a passive receptor is thereby picked out, which is also conjoined to the cause through proximity and a mutually binding principle eliciting action from the one and passivity from the other. The '*ratio*', the logical principle, which Cicero speaks of is the principle on the basis of which it should be possible to unravel the complexity of the event. Since the event is configured according to this principle, we should be able to retrace the precise connections underlying it, as also the nature of those connections. For the event is the unique result, i.e. the only possible result, of a specific cause. Thus dying from snakebite is a state-of-affairs which obtains, with respect to Philoctetes; the obtaining of the *katēgorēma* could only have been brought about by the action of a snake and its proximity to Philoctetes.

There is a logical structure which is possible to dismantle in view of the necessary relations binding each constituent, though it may be that the cause itself is not discernible to us. Thus, in a passage in his *Topics*, Cicero (*Top.* 63) corrects the view according to which some things happen 'by chance' ('*fortuna*'), and do not have a determinate cause. Cicero, who has just discussed the distinctions between necessary conditions and a cause which necessarily brings about an effect, stipulates that 'nothing happens without a cause'. Therefore,

particular. They do not seem to have considered causation in terms of this category. In any case, S.E.'s talk of relatives in relation to the Stoics is not likely to be a reference to anything the Stoics might have said about relatives.

⁵⁶ See BARNES 1990 pp.2672–88 who focuses the initial characterization of the cause by S.E. on multiple configurations of the relational character of the cause, which end up accommodating all dogmatic theories of causation, though no one school in particular.

what is attributed to chance must be parsed as that which has an untraceable, ‘*obscura*’, cause, which has brought about a state-of-affairs ‘in a hidden way’.⁵⁷ For there is a cause. The commitment to the existence of a cause comes together with the commitment to the complex structure by which an incorporeal *katēgorēma* obtains with respect to something passively conjoined to the active body-cause.

7.5. THE CAUSAL SCHEMA

In distinguishing wisdom from being wise, the Stoics distinguish (1) the cause from (2) that of which it is a cause, whilst at the same time distinguishing (3) the affected body, that which is acted upon by the active body, and for which a cause is a cause. Thus the standard formula applied to the Stoics holds that (1) a corporeal cause (e.g. wisdom, or the sun) is the cause of (2) an incorporeal *katēgorēma* (e.g. of being wise or being melted) for (3) an affected body (e.g. Socrates, or a piece of wax):

every cause is a body, they say, which becomes a cause for a body, of something incorporeal⁵⁸

7.5.1. A Structural Principle of Ontology

We recognize the skeleton of the standard formulation establishing the relativity of cause and effect S.E. ascribed to the Dogmatists in general (S.E. *M.* 9.207): ‘a cause is of something (in the genitive) for something (in the dative)’ (*‘tinos aition tini’*). The relational character to which S.E. particularly draws attention is ultimately articulated within a standard expression of causation, ingrained in the common usage of the Greek word ‘*aitios*’ to express responsibility (*‘aitios*’ being the adjectival form from which ‘*aition*’ is the substantivized noun-term). Someone’s responsibility, in Greek, is conceived of as split between the thing one is responsible for (expressed in the genitive) and the thing or person affected by the thing one is responsible for (in the dative). Examples abound in the classical orators, e.g. Lysias, in his speech against Agoratus (Lys. 13.57), says of the latter that ‘he is responsible, *aitios*, of death (a noun in the genitive: *thanatou*) for Menestratus (in the dative)’.

⁵⁷ Cic. *Top.* 63: ‘Cum enim nihil sine causa fiat, hoc ipsum est fortunae: eventus obscura causa et latenter efficitur’. On the characteristically Stoic approach of this analysis see REINHARDT 2003 pp.330–1 with commentary on these lines.

⁵⁸ S.E.*M.* 9.211: ‘οἱ Στωϊκοὶ μὲν πᾶν αἴτιον σώμα φασὶ σώματι ἀσωμάτου τινὸς αἴτιον γίνεσθαι’.

One of the threads pursued by Frede (1987c) in his analysis of causation is that the Stoics draw on this usage of *'aitios'* as responsible, with its conceptual and grammatical configuration, to develop their specific causal analysis, which is not so much a syntactical appropriation of the expression of responsibility as a properly conceptual analysis. That is to say that what the Stoics revolutionize is not so much the triadic relation—after all, as we see, the triadic relation fits both Peripatetic and Stoic models.⁵⁹ The analysis rather alters the understanding of what it is to be responsible. For the Stoics identify responsibility as that by which something comes to be the case. A cause is responsible insofar as it makes a state-of-affairs obtain, which did not, before the cause was active, and which obtains as long as the cause remains active. The Stoics further identify the thing which obtains as necessarily ontologically distinct from the cause. Thus the controversial move is to have recognized in the very relation between the cause and that of which it is the cause, a distinction between a body and an incorporeal thing, whose ontological status is altered (i) through its relation to the cause, and (ii) by how the cause necessitates that it enters in a relation with what has become the passive body. This shift detaches the analysis of causation away from the moral connotations associated with responsibility in the original, and ordinary, use of *'aitios'*. It re-articulates causation as an investigation into the ontology of responsibility, which strictly frames the relation between the only cause that could have caused a given state-of-affairs. Through this recalibration the Stoics establish causation as a founding, structural principal of ontology.

On the surface, the triadic relational formula seems flexible. It is shared across different schools of thought. But as it applies to the Stoics, once the 'of which' (*tinis*) and 'for which' (*tini*) of the cause are assigned, the incorporeal *katēgorēma* becomes the centrepiece on which hang the distinctions, and the internal order underlying the triadic relation. In fact the formula is very precise: it indicates the stringent requirements framing the causal relation. The binding force of the relation lies in this: that the cause, in the presence of (i.e. in proximity and conjunction with) a certain body, cannot but be the cause of a specific *katēgorēma* to come about in relation to that passive body, and in the *katēgorēma* coming about (obtaining) the cause is said to be *for* the passive body. Thus the sun in the presence of wax cannot but be the cause of melting for the wax; the knife, when applied to a loaf of bread, cannot but be the cause of the bread's being cut, or being cut for the bread (note the natural shift from the focus on the *katēgorēma* to a propositional articulation, more at 8.1 below). It is only with respect to an appropriate body (i.e. capable of being affected) that a certain body becomes a cause: without the wax, the sun is not the cause of being melted; without the bread, the knife is not the cause of being

⁵⁹ The triadic formula can already be recognized to varying degrees of strictness in formulation in Aristotle and Plato, see MENN 1999 pp.218 and 219 n.5.

cut. But once a body is under the appropriate circumstances, it cannot but play its causal role; a role which has a precise and determinate effect, which necessarily comes about. In this perspective, the cause is directly and solely responsible for its effect.

As with the sun and the knife, so too in the case of wisdom: the distinction between a body like wisdom and the *katēgorēma*, being wise, is framed within a causal relation, as that between a cause which (under appropriate circumstances) cannot but cause being wise to obtain. By being thus caused to obtain, being wise indeed stands in a particular relation to wisdom. But wisdom itself, which is a soul in a certain state (and thus corporeal), is active because it is conjoined to the appropriate passive body whose proximity guarantees its activity. This passive body is the body the soul belongs to, or is in, since a soul is the sort of thing which ‘pervades a body through and through’ (D.L. 7.138). Thus wisdom causes being wise to obtain for the body it is in (say, Socrates).

The Stoics can support this claim on the basis of their view about bodies: namely that each body has a limited set of ways of being active, depending on the kind of body it is: the sun heats, melts, a knife cuts, and wisdom brings about one unique effect, namely being wise. Thus wisdom, by being conjoined to the kind of passive body which necessitates that it exercises its causal power, is necessarily the cause of being wise for the person who has wisdom, or whose soul is in a state of wisdom. Can wisdom cease to act, as a knife can? The answer is, of course, yes, once the passive body is no longer in proximity to the cause, at which moment the cause ceases to be a cause.

It is therefore a logical structure which will, in the relevant cases, be at the basis of moral responsibility—and not vice versa. For a person will be deemed responsible for an action if it is possible to identify him or her (or the state of their soul) as the unique cause which brings about a precise state-of-affairs. Hence, for the Stoics, the distinction between principal and auxiliary cause (mentioned in 7.2.3 above) is made in terms of a distinction between two states-of-affairs whose causes are distinct, one belonging to the thing involved in the action, another external to it. In the case of the rolling cylinder, one state-of-affairs corresponds to its being pushed, another state-of-affairs corresponds to its actually spinning. Accordingly, two separate causes are involved: for the first, the hand that pushes, for the second, something about the thing the cylinder is which, ‘by its own nature and force’, actually causes the cylinder to roll (Cic. *Fat.* 43). If, therefore, there is a question about assigning moral responsibility—parsed by the Stoics as ‘what is up to us’ or ‘what is in our power’⁶⁰—it will be a matter of locating the analogous cause in a

⁶⁰ What is up to us: τὸ ἐφ’ ἡμῶν, this is the question the Stoics ask. See Alex. *Fat.* 181.13–14: ‘ἀναιρουντες γὰρ τὸ ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν τὸν ἄνθρωπον τῆς αἰρέσεώς τε καὶ πράξεως τῶν ἀντικειμένων λέγουσιν ἐφ’ ἡμῖν εἶναι τὸ γινόμενον καὶ δι’ ἡμῶν’, ‘[the Stoics] remove from man the power to choose between two opposite actions, but nevertheless say that what occurs because of us is

human being to what, in the cylinder, makes it roll. It follows that the question is not one about freedom to do otherwise. Rather, as Bobzien shows, the question must be set out in terms of the autonomy of the agent.⁶¹

In other words, to ascribe moral responsibility to an agent is to take stock of the causal analysis: for the ascription of responsibility depends on the correct analysis of the causal relation underlying an action and its resultant effect, from a spinning cylinder to a human being acting well or badly. The Stoic analysis zeroes in on the one cause whose activation has brought about the actual state-of-affairs. Because one cause causes one state-of-affairs, it should, in theory, be possible to infer the cause from the state-of-affairs: e.g., from the spinning of the cylinder, we infer the cause is the cylindrical disposition of the cylinder (its *hexis*, or qualitative state), or from her wise behaviour, we infer its cause to be the wisdom of, say, Diotima.

Just as with the case of the cylinder, there is a distinction, when it comes to the actions of people, between the state-of-affairs, by which we are impressed by, say, an external impressor, e.g. a transparent liquid in a glass (which corresponds, by analogy, to the pressure applied on the cylinder), and the state-of-affairs, in which it is the case that we drink the drink. It is something in us, namely the assent to drinking the drink which is the cause of drinking obtaining with respect to us, i.e. for the state-of-affairs in which we are drinking to obtain. The responsibility, in other words, for drinking lies in us (in our souls, whether for instance we have, through experience, stored enough conceptions such as to distinguish between water and vodka, and thus correctly recognize the content of our impression). We can thus distinguish between two causes, that which caused us to have the impression, and that which caused us to act on the impression. The latter is something in us, or about us, and therefore up to us such that we are, in this sense, responsible for our actions.⁶² It will turn out that all questions concerned with our actions, questions about what we want, what we should want, and what we are responsible for (but also questions about what we assent to quite generally, though no external action follows thereby) are derivative, for the Stoics, on a

up to us'. For the use of this expressio, see also Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1056C–D; Epictetus *Ench.* 1.1. Cicero throughout *De Fato* speaks of what is 'in our power', '*nostra in potestate*'.

⁶¹ See BOBZIEN 2005 chap. 6 *esp.* pp.276–90.

⁶² Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1056A–B pressurizes the Stoic position: examining the case of the wise man planting false impressions in foolish people (i.e. everyone else). We still are responsible for acting on those impressions, because it is up to each of us to act, or not, on the impressions which we have, even if we could not help but have them. The wise man is absolved from responsibility (all he does, to continue the example suggested above, is place the glass of transparent liquid in front of us), see BOBZIEN 2005 pp.271–3. But then, says Plutarch, not everything is fated to happen through antecedent causes. As BOBZIEN 2005 pp.277–313 argues, this displaces the debate the Stoics are engaged in, for they are not concerned to prove that in a given circumstance, we cannot do otherwise, but rather that a person is causally responsible for his or her actions (which will be perfectly in accordance with fate) and thereby held morally accountable for them.

clear-cut distinction between the state of the cause and its role, and the *katēgorēma* it causes to obtain.

7.5.2. Action and Causation

Actions are realizations of causal relations. This in itself is not a new discovery. Recent scholarship in particular has channelled the causal analysis of action into discussions about psychology in Stoicism in terms of a psychology of actions. If actions have their originating cause in the thing (in the *hexis* of inanimate beings, and in the soul of animate ones), then there is, as far as rational souls are concerned, a mentalization of action. A number of source texts report that impulses, as also desires and wishes (considered as kinds of impulses, which sometimes are not acted upon) are directed towards *katēgorēmata*.⁶³ Thus Annas (1992) argues that impulses and desires correspond to the soul's propelling itself, or having the impulse to bring it about that a certain *katēgorēma* be the case, that is, become true of the person the soul belongs to.⁶⁴ By acting in a certain way we act on our impulses. We thus 'fulfil the causal schema' (p.96); for the impulse in a person's soul, being distinct from the person who has it, thereby constitutes the cause of the person's action.

The Stoics are thus shown to account for action in terms depending solely on the activity of the soul, ultimately concentrating responsibility for action on the soul's impulse (and assent⁶⁵) and conceiving of the effect of the cause as states-of-affairs rendered actual by the cause. As Margaret Graver (2007) notes, this allows the Stoics to recognize distinctions between actions, which might look the same from the outside, e.g. that the wise man and the fool might both be carrying out similar actions, (say) they are both planting a tree, but the cause of planting a tree for the wise man is his wisdom, whereas for the fool it will be something else; to go back to Plutarch's point (cf. n.62) it will be a false impression to which the fool assented. It follows that the states-of-affairs brought about are different, on the one hand the wise man's being wise by planting a tree, on the other hand the fool foolishly planting a tree.⁶⁶

⁶³ See Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.9a–9b; Sen. *Ep.* 113.18; Clem. *Strom.* 7.7.38.2.

⁶⁴ ANNAS 1992 pp.95–100.

⁶⁵ The impulse is a kind of assent (Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.9b), on the questions raised thereby see, for a conciliatory account, ANNAS 1992 pp.97–8; BRENNAN 2005 pp.87–92; ILDEFONSE 2011; but see GOULET-CAZÉ 2011a on the possibility of an over-powering impulse which evades assent.

⁶⁶ GRAVER 2007 pp.27–8 analyses the example of walking: a dog which is walking is not the same as a human who is walking. This firmly positions the discussion in terms of the kind of thing an acting thing is: for humans, in receiving an impression, we have an impulse to act and we assent to it (if we are wise, it is wisdom which is the cause of the effect, if not it is our foolish character), for animals, the kind of *pneuma* that animates them is responsible for their actions.

Put this way, the mentalizing of action, articulated on the basis of the causal schema, makes the Stoics appear very close to an Aristotelian account of virtuous activity: the virtue of an act depends on the disposition and knowledge of virtuous principles in the agent, so that no matter how similar the actions of a self-controlled person will be to those of a virtuous person, they will always differ.⁶⁷ This would however be a distortion of the Stoic position—a distortion which arises from the start when positing a psychology of action.

The roots of this distortion are not in modern scholarship, but already, for instance, in the Senecan revisiting of the place and role of *katēgorēmata* and *lekta* in *Letter* 117, which we discussed previously (in 7.2.2 above). For Seneca what matters is the state of the agent: thus, if it is a good state, then ‘being wise cannot but belong to the good man’.⁶⁸ From which Seneca argues that the dependence of the *katēgorēma* on the thing it belongs to makes it assimilable to it:

neither can exist without the other: he who is wise is a wise man; he who is a wise man, is wise [...] such that the one appears to be the same as the other.⁶⁹

It is not that the discussions about the psychology of action are, as in Seneca, intent on belittling the role the Stoics give to *katēgorēmata*. As in Seneca, however, they rely, if not on their interchangeability, at least on the one being an indicator of the other, and vice versa, of the *katēgorēma* and its unique cause. The results of an inquiry into a psychology of action provide a fully developed account of the movements of the soul in terms of acts of assent. Thus actions can be reduced to acts of assent. These are then differentiated by the effects, e.g., as Graver suggests, Socrates is wise by walking, or Seneca behaves wisely by committing suicide.⁷⁰ However, the effects may or may not actually come about: as Annas (1992 p.100) says, ‘the rest is up to nature’.

But the question of action for the Stoics is a different question, for it concerns the realization of the causal schema. By analysing the question of action as a question of human psychology, the risk is to collapse action onto responsibility. The question of responsibility and of how, and what, to assent

However, in the absence of assent there is no moral responsibility to add to the causal role of the animating principle in the animal; see also GOULET-CAZÉ 2011 pp.166–70.

⁶⁷ E.g. Arist. *EN* 2.3, 1105a28–33, see COOPE 2012.

⁶⁸ Sen. *Ep.* 117. 9: ‘hoc, ut sapiat, contingere nisi bono non potest’.

⁶⁹ Sen. *Ep.* 117.8–9: ‘Hoc ut scias, neutrum esse sine altero potest: qui sapit sapiens est; qui sapiens est sapit. [...] tale hoc sit, ut quibusdam utrumque unum videatur atque idem.’

⁷⁰ Though not mentioned by any of the previously mentioned scholars, this interpretation ultimately develops a similar line of thought as KERFERD 1983 pp.96–7 on *katēgorēmata*, which are not chronologically consecutive to causes, but considered as different modes of expression of the cause, such that wisdom ‘is seen as’ being wise wherever wisdom is present. Clearly here *katēgorēmata* are not considered as ontologically distinct items, nor are they analysed as linguistic items, but as modes of behaviour of bodies, framed by the causal schema in which the body is the cause.

to, become key, at the expense of the question of the causal relation. It is characteristic of the Senecan turn in Stoicism to have elicited this reversal of priorities. For the question of moral responsibility, and the discussion of compatibilism between an autonomous agent and a reality structured by antecedent causes, are subordinate to that structure if only because, whatever actions end up being carried out, each and every corporeal constituent of reality is, in any case, constantly acting (or else being acted upon).

The texts which report in the most precise terms the relation of the agent to the effect, or even the potential agent to what he or she desires to do, frame the relation as one between an agent standing in a relation to a *katēgorēma*. For the *katēgorēma* is there already, that is to say present in reality, there for an impulse to act, or a desire to be directed towards it. Thus:

impulses are towards *katēgorēmata*⁷¹

no one desires the water, but to drink the water⁷²

The causal schema is realized each time the body, which has the potential to be a cause, has successfully positioned itself to make it the case that a *katēgorēma* obtains. The positioning we are speaking of is thus not a locative positioning but an ontological one, by which a body, by being active, actualizes its relation with an incorporeal *katēgorēma*, thereby actualizing a state-of-affairs. Action, then, is framed around the *katēgorēma* of which both the cause and the passive body become functions in standing each in a different relation to it. If there is something like moral responsibility to identify, in the case of moral agents, it is in a person's coming to terms with the complexity of this relation.⁷³ For by merely living an animate being actualizes a state-of-affairs which makes up the structure of reality (whether it likes it or not, or, desires it or not).

This brings the discussion of the causal relation down to two crucial points: firstly, (i), the obtaining of a *katēgorēma* with respect to a passive body is at the heart of all interactions and arrangements between all animate and inanimate beings. That is, everything and everyone that make up the cosmos is part of the structure of the cosmic *systema* in virtue of standing in a relation to an obtaining *katēgorēma*. Secondly, (ii), the cause is that which guarantees the status of the *katēgorēma* as obtaining. But obtaining for the *katēgorēma* comes

⁷¹ Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.9b.4–5: 'ὁρμὰς δὲ ἐπὶ κατηγορήματα'.

⁷² Clem. *Strom.* 7.7.38.2: 'οὐδεὶς ἐπιθυμεῖ πόματος, ἀλλὰ τοῦ πιεῖν τὸ ποτόν'. See also S.E. *PH* 2.230.

⁷³ This is, at heart, what the re-appropriation of the notion of *prohairesis* consists in for Epictetus: not, as in Aristotle, the deliberative choice over the possibility of doing otherwise (e.g. Arist. *EN* 3.5, 1113a10–11), but the acknowledgement of our mental activities being the originator/cause of our actions—the acknowledgement itself (of what belongs to us) being the only thing which is ultimately up to us, and which therefore makes us the person we are: e.g. Epict. *Diss.* 1.17.21–7; see GOURINAT 2005.

about in virtue of the cause being conjoined to something which is acted upon. Thus a *katēgorēma* always obtains in relation to a passive element.

But what then is a *katēgorēma* before and after it is caused to obtain? In setting out the causal schema, Zeno affirms that:

it is impossible that a cause be present (*pareinai*), if what it is a cause of does not obtain⁷⁴

There is thus a basic commitment, in the Stoic account of causation, that a cause is inseparable from its effect. We have seen how it should be possible to trace a cause down from an effect and anticipate an effect from a cause, in virtue of the stringency of the relation. It is the '*ratio*' Cicero speaks of. However, the terms of that relation are such that it is also possible not to be able to trace down a cause, because, as Cicero says, it is hidden; and it is also possible not to be sure, in the absence of an identified cause, whether a state-of-affairs actually obtains or continues to obtain. The Stoics are repeatedly said to be reluctant to search for causes which are too deep or obscure.⁷⁵ But this does not imply that there are some obtaining states-of-affairs which the Stoics think do not have a cause. It rather implies the limitations of human understanding and capacity to recognize the causes. Thus Chrysippus affirms that even the way dice fall has a cause which is not chance but is in the dice themselves, or 'if not entirely in the dice, then also from outside'.⁷⁶ For the Stoics, the notion of cause is thus based on a double assumption that the activity of any kind of body produces an effect, which is a *katēgorēma* which obtains, and that the cosmos is constituted of state-of-affairs which are the case.⁷⁷ As part of

⁷⁴ Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.4–5.

⁷⁵ The Stoics are notoriously wary of aetiology 'because of the obscurity of the causes' in Strabo 2.3.8.25, and see Galen *PHP* 4.7.34 on Chrysippus' wariness from searching for causes. Traditionally, and already in antiquity, Posidonius is supposed to be an exception, called out, in Strabo 2.3.8.24, for having 'Aristotelized' in his aetiological investigations; he is presented as 'having been inspired by Aristotle' (Simpl. in *Phys.* 291.22–3) in contrasting the physical and mathematical approach to explanations in astronomy. He deals in particular with causes which concern questions about the soul (as in D.L. 7.158; e.g. Galen *PHP* 4.7.36–7 on why we cry) and natural phenomena. But a close examination of the discussions reported by Galen on the differences between Chrysippus and Posidonius show that it is not so much reluctance on the part of the former and eager aetilogizing from the latter that is at stake, but rather disagreements about the identification of the cause. See thus GRAVER 2007 pp.76–81.

⁷⁶ Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1045C: 'ὁ Χρύσιππος ἀντιλέγων, [...] τὸν ἀστράγαλον καὶ τὸν ζυγὸν καὶ πολλὰ τῶν μὴ δυναμένων ἄλλοτ' ἄλλας λαμβάνειν πτώσεις καὶ ῥοπὰς ἄνευ τινὸς αἰτίας καὶ διαφορᾶς ἢ περὶ αὐτὰ πάντως ἢ περὶ τὰ ἔξωθεν γινομένης', 'Chrysippus speaks of [...] dice, scales and many of those things which cannot fall or stay in suspension this way or that, without a cause or variation, either occurring entirely within the things themselves, or outside them'. He thus rehearses the discussion about the principal and auxiliary causes, with the addition of the obscurity of both causes.

⁷⁷ See in this respect STRUCK 2016 pp.201–6 analysing the Stoics' commitment to the truth of divination within the broader commitment to cosmic sympathy, as an established, and necessary, web of causal interactions.

the causal process we have focused on the status of obtaining, but for an incorporeal to obtain, it has to first be real. As we have mentioned a number of times in passing, there are two modes of being real for incorporeals according to the Stoics, obtaining and subsisting. It is now time to examine more closely how and why there are two such modes.

7.6. TO BE REAL

A body, in being a cause, causes a *katēgorēma* to obtain (*huparchein*). For, as we saw, ‘a cause cannot exist whilst that of which it is a cause does not obtain’ (cf. n.74 above). Two points follow from this claim: the first point, discussed in 7.6.1 below, is that the Stoics use the term ‘to obtain’ to designate a specific status in ontology. This status is contrasted to being or existence, here with an emphatic prefix ‘*pareinai*’. The Stoics thus introduce a technical use of ‘to obtain’ parallel to a technical use of ‘existence’ which is, in this context, reserved to bodies alone.⁷⁸ Secondly (the topic of 7.6.2 below), it is in being what a cause is of that a *katēgorēma* obtains, but the underlying point is that, given that the *katēgorēma* is a distinct kind of item, it can also not obtain if a cause fails to cause it to do so. There still is a status the *katēgorēma* has nevertheless; it subsists. This is precisely the status which enables it to be available to obtain, if and when it is caused. What is more, not all states-of-affairs are the case, or are actual with respect to a passive body. Some states-of-affairs, for instance, obtain with respect to other incorporeals: e.g. the state-of-affairs in which time is the measure of the motion of the cosmos. The ontological status of *lekta* is thus a question which overlaps with causation in important ways but is not rooted to the causal relation. There are *katēgorēmata*, and *lekta*, which do not obtain, and there are *katēgorēmata*, and *lekta*, which obtain out of the causal schema.

7.6.1. The Causal Relation as Revelatory, but not Generative of Ontological Distinction

Morphologically, the term ‘*katēgorēma*’ is coined on the basis of the Greek verb ‘*katēgorein*’, the verb (mentioned in 7.4 above) which Aristotle first uses in the sense of saying something true of something.⁷⁹ For Aristotle—and this

⁷⁸ The suggestion in BAILEY 2014 to move away from talk of existence in the context of Stoic ontology because it is ‘confusing’ (p.257), seems itself over-cautious, not least because the Stoics speak freely of ‘*einai*’ and ‘*pareinai*’ all the better to contrast the mode of existence of bodies to the reality of the incorporeals.

⁷⁹ For the establishment of this usage see Arist. *Cat.* 3, 1b10–15. See MANN 2000 p.23.

is, at heart, the origin of the debate discussed at 7.3 above between the Stoics and the Peripatetics—what is predicated is a property, such as wisdom, of a subject, a *hupokeimenon*, e.g. Socrates. For the Stoics, what is predicated is a thing in itself, distinct from the property. They call '*katēgorēma*' the incorporeal item thus distinguished. The Stoics do not appeal to an Aristotelian pedigree but rather to an etymological analysis for their use of the term, which is broken down into '*to kata tinos agoreuomenon*', 'that which is said of something'.⁸⁰ With Aristotle in the *Categories*, predication is fundamentally set out as saying something true of something. What is at stake in the *Categories* is establishing the degrees of separability between the subject of which predicates are said, and the predicates which are said of it (between, e.g., animal said of man, and cultivated said of Socrates). The shift therefore between 'said of' and 'true of' occurs at a logical level of analysis of substances. Predication becomes a linguistic tool which serves to express the logical distinctions, and the order of predication, between subject and property.

But the Stoics reconfigure the relation, which is now between a thing, the *katēgorēma*, whose characteristic is that it is a thing which is said of something, and which obtains in reality with respect to the behaviour of other things distinct from it. Thus the Stoics describe the relation between being melted and the wax, not in terms of the *katēgorēma* belonging to or being predicated of the wax, but rather in terms of the *katēgorēma* attaining a certain mode of reality, in virtue of being true of something.

The term '*huparchein*' is also a term used by Aristotle. In the *Prior Analytics*, *huparchein* with the dative is used as a parallel expression to '*katēgorēsthai*' with the genitive, 'to be predicated of': it fixes the relation between predicate and subject, describing the way a predicate belongs to a subject.⁸¹ Again, with the Stoics, the usage moves from logical connector to ontological status-maker. A *katēgorēma* does not belong to a subject. It is, moreover, far from clear-cut that there is, properly speaking, a subject at all. For the Stoics do not set out the relation between a *katēgorēma* and, say, a body like the wax, as one between predicate and subject. They rather consider the relation to reveal the ontological structure by which a state-of-affairs, such as the wax's being melted, is the case, obtains, and is thus true with respect to the wax. There is the wax, and there is the state-of-affairs which contains not the wax itself but the wax insofar as the *katēgorēma* is said of it. This apparent splitting in two of the wax, once as itself, another as a presence in some respect constitutive of a state-of-affairs (and which is an incorporeal *lekton*), is the basis for the Stoics' developing their own account of a *ptōsis*, a case (or, as we shall call the Stoic notion, the case-*ptōsis*), which will be the focus of 9.2.1 below. The

⁸⁰ D.L. 7.64, taken up also in the definitions in the *Suda* for '*katēgorēma*', entry 1039—a collage of definitions mostly found in D.L. 7.64.

⁸¹ See STRIKER 2009 p.75.

relation with the thing, here the wax, is what guarantees that the state-of-affairs obtains and is true. Since that relation is guaranteed within causation, the cause doubles up as a truth-maker in virtue of its causing the *katēgorēma* to obtain—obtaining which then is achieved with respect to the passive body with which the cause is conjoined. Thus the causal relation highlights that there is a real distinction, based on a real relation between something which is the case, or which obtains and that in virtue of which it obtains, namely the cause, and with respect to which it obtains, namely the passive body. The causal schema thus guarantees and validates the status of the obtaining *katēgorēma*. But being a guarantor of a *katēgorēma*'s obtaining with respect to something is one thing, it does not make the cause the creator of the *katēgorēma*. This is why the causal relation highlights, rather than founds, the distinction between the existence of bodies, and the obtaining of an incorporeal.

7.6.2. The Dependence Theory

The 'hupo-' prefix present in 'huparchein' and in 'huphistanai' ('to subsist'), the other term used to describe incorporeals, would suggest some form of inferior, subordinated mode of reality. It is in this way that 'huparchein' and 'huphistanai', when used to characterize incorporeals, have often been interpreted by commentators. Anthony Long, for instance, takes the verbs to be clear indications that *lekta* have no independent reality but are dependent on the existence of minds.⁸² Again, this view is sanctified by critical and heterodox accounts such as the one offered by Seneca, for whom to be wise (*sapere*) is 'dependent on wisdom' ('*ex quo pendet*' Ep. 117.3).

In the most recent scholarship, the implications of a dependence theory of being for the incorporeals are further developed. Thus Michele Alessandrelli (2013 p.25) speaks of an 'instantaneous generation' of the *katēgorēma* as an attribute of a quality which a body possesses, such as wisdom possessed by the soul. The obtaining of the *katēgorēma* is then considered as itself a presence utterly determined by the mere presence (and not also activity) of the cause, and is dependent on it to the extent that it 'simply disappears' (p.39) when the cause-body disappears. The relation of incorporeals to bodies is parsed in terms of incorporeals 'hiding behind' bodies: *lekta* (understood as the meaning of individual words) 'hide behind' words, void 'hides behind' the cosmos, place, behind its occupying body (p.117). A more comprehensive account is proposed by Dominic Bailey (2014), who aligns all four incorporeals in terms of their existential dependence on bodies, as all needing to be occupied by

⁸² LONG 1971b pp.89–90, developed in terms of action and impulse in LONG 1976.

bodies. The basic model for the proposed interpretation relies on the relation of space to bodies, as that which gets occupied by a body. Obtaining for *lekta* comes down to the necessary existence of a specific body which occupies the place of the referent of a *lekton*.⁸³ Truth and meaning are then shown to depend on an actual body being present. It then follows that all propositions must ultimately have a body as a referent, whose behaviour determines their truth-value.

As far as the mind-dependence of *lekta* is concerned, I have argued to some length (in particular at 2.2, 4.2, 4.3 above) that this is a difficult claim to maintain in the face of a detailed analysis of our texts and what the debates with rival schools reveal. But the dependence view put forward here is different. It supposes the inclusion of incorporeals in reality as facilitators for change and action in bodies. It bases itself on the relational characteristic of incorporeals (whether they are space, time, void, or *lekta*) with respect to bodies. In 7.5 above that relational nature, in particular in the case of *katēgorēmata*, was indeed belaboured; but the result of the discussion there was to insist on the complexity of that relation—a complexity which is not sufficiently valued when it is reduced to a question of the relativity of the cause to the incorporeal *katēgorēma* of which it is a cause. The claim put forward here, therefore, is not so much a clear-cut rejection of the dependence interpretation, as a plea for a deep reconsideration and reconfiguration of the assumptions that lead to it.

The main assumption of the dependence account is that, for the Stoics, bodies and the existence of bodies are ‘fundamental’ or ‘prior’. This is the leitmotiv in Bailey, and it is the grounding principle which directs Alessandrelli’s account of *lekta* as purely semantic gap-fillers. In this they follow in the footsteps of a distinguished pedigree, most explicitly Plotinus, who says of Stoic ontology that ‘existence comes to the other things from matter’.⁸⁴ But, as we noted in 3.1 above, this tradition is a critical and ultimately reductive reaction to Stoic doctrine. What courses through it, from antiquity to the most recent expression of it, is an interpretation of the Stoics as rebelliously anti-Platonic. That is to say that they are taken not merely to contest the existence of Platonic Ideas, but to reverse the scale of beings: the most real, fundamental,

⁸³ BAILEY 2014 pp.280–4. Though not mentioned by Bailey, SCHUBERT 1994 pp.154–5 offers a similar line of interpretation, by which obtaining for *lekta* must always involve a relation to a body. Schubert is less systematic than Bailey: he focuses only on *lekta* and insists (pp.165–7) on the wide use of *huparchein* and *huphistanai* and thus on the difficulty of pin-pointing the terms of the distinction. Be that as it may, in the relevant contexts Schubert reads the subsistence/obtaining relation into one of potentiality vs. realization, to the extent that *huparchein* is assimilable to existence, or ‘immaterial existence’ since it is concomitant and inherent to the existence of a body. For reasons developed in this section, this view seems untenable.

⁸⁴ Plot. *Enn.* 6.1.25.22–3: ‘ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐτοὶ φήσουσι παρὰ τῆς ὕλης, οἶμαι, τοῖς ἄλλοις τὸ εἶναι ὑπάρχειν’. Discussed in 3.1.1 with n.13 above with reference to the materialist account of Stoicism given by Plotinus.

or prior is now the corporeal, and the incorporeal is subordinated and dependent on the corporeal. The close reading of texts offered in 3.1 above on the status of bodies rather shows that the critical reaction to Plato's Ideas is, again, less simple than a mere reversal of a hierarchy. In particular, the earlier analysis results in an account of body, for the Stoics, which is not separable from the four incorporeals, as understood by the Stoics. The corporeal and the incorporeal have parallel modes of reality; they are thus complementary, and not respectively superior or inferior. It is only from the Platonic perspective that we find attempts at parsing this parallelism, or ontological cohabitation, in terms of a reversed hierarchy.

The reality of *lekta*, as obtaining or as subsisting, is not subordinated to the existence of bodies, though in obtaining and subsisting *lekta* stand in a relation to bodies. But corporeal things as well, in existing, stand in a relation to *lekta*. It would be more accurate to speak of an interdependence of bodies and incorporeals.⁸⁵ But the Stoics do not speak in a language of dependence, one of the reasons being that they are not engaged in a reverse-Platonism. Rather, they are accounting for the interconnections which make up the *systēma*. Thus 'huparchein' ('obtaining') is used to indicate the status a *katēgorēma* has when something is the case, that is, when the *katēgorēma* is ascribed truly to something.

A body exists for itself. But a part of what it is to be a body is for that body to satisfy the criterion for corporeality (by which a body acts or is acted upon). This implies that, e.g. in being active, a body is conjoined to another such as to cause a *katēgorēma* to obtain with respect to that passive body. In this light, the assumption which needs to be reconsidered from the dependence account is what a body is for the Stoics. Typically, the reverse-Platonism reading takes the Stoics to have stepped into the materialist shoes of the Giants from Plato's *Sophist*, and to have thus endorsed a general materialization of being.⁸⁶ But the Stoics do not proceed in a such a straightforward manner. For they reshape their understanding of being to fit the criterion of acting and/or being acted upon in such a way that being is no longer fundamental, as in Plato (whether for the Giants or the Friends of the Forms). For the Stoics, being is a characteristic of certain constituents of reality, whose behaviour, as existents, puts them in complex relations both to other bodies and, at the same time, to *lekta*, as to the other incorporeals.

Obtaining is a status in ontology which is often sustained by a double relation between two conjoined bodies. But obtaining is not a status determined by the conjunction of two bodies. There can be no cause (e.g. because

⁸⁵ See BOERI 2001 who discusses what he calls the 'reciprocal dependence' between bodies and incorporeals, considered thus to be 'complementary' rather than inferior realities.

⁸⁶ Typically this is the interpretation BAILEY 2014 pp.258–60 gives of the Stoic appropriation of Giants' position.

it is hidden). There are states-of-affairs in which a *katēgorēma* is said of something and obtains without being related to a body: mathematical truths for example (though the Stoics might end up conceding that mathematical truths, which are true *lekta*, are ultimately caused to obtain through the activity of the one active principle). The point here, however, is that the causal schema does not saturate all configurations of obtaining *katēgorēmata*. There are, as mentioned above, states-of-affairs in which a *katēgorēma* does not obtain with respect to a body, but for example with respect to an incorporeal, such as the state-of-affairs corresponding to time flies, or more generally to any meta-theoretical claims, e.g. that *lekta* are incorporeal.

Thus, if Zeno considers, at first, *katēgorēmata* obtaining with respect to bodies within the causal schema, it is also clear from the causal configuration (i) that obtaining is a status in reality, i.e. it is a mode of reality which some things just have, and (ii) that the presence of a cause guarantees the status but does not create the status out of thin air. Thus at some point, whether with Zeno himself or Cleanthes, whose talk of *lekta* and *katēgorēmata* indicate his involvement in discussions of this topic (7.1.1 above), the status of obtaining is detached from what is possibly an initial mooring to causation and thus to the necessity of always obtaining with respect to a body (namely with respect to the passive element). There are states-of-affairs which are true, and accordingly obtain, of which it is either impossible, at least for humans, to grasp what their cause is, or which are not, at least directly, supported by the causal schema in which two bodies are conjoined. As logic develops within the Stoa, we move from a causal analysis as guarantor of the status of obtaining for *katēgorēmata* and *lekta*, to acknowledging the truth of propositions, *axiōmata*. The latter are true in virtue of containing a *katēgorēma* which obtains with respect to something else, but no longer perforce a passive body. It should thus be possible to say that flying, say, obtains with respect to time, or that subsisting as an incorporeal obtains for a *lekton*, insofar as [a *lekton* subsists] is true.

Establishing the status of obtaining makes the Stoics the first philosophers in Western thought to make room in ontology for what Bertrand Russell, in 1918, designated as one of the most basic truisms, namely that ‘the world contains facts, which are what they are whatever we may choose to think about them’.⁸⁷ If the Stoics alight on a truism, however, they arrive at it through a very idiosyncratic reasoning, one rooted in considerations about ontology and the parallel reality of bodies and incorporeals. Indeed, what may appear to coincide with Russell’s facts ultimately have only a surface resemblance to them, and some overlap in discussions of propositional logic. For the obtaining of *lekta* is only one aspect of the reality of *lekta*. To fully appreciate the

⁸⁷ RUSSELL 1956a p.182, referring here to WITTGENSTEIN 1922, whose proposition 1.1 asserts that ‘the world is the totality of facts, not of things’.

ontological structure which holds together the cosmos, we must account for the non-obtaining and yet real incorporeal *lekta*.

7.6.3. To Obtain and to Subsist

In a passage on time Stobaeus reports that Chrysippus distinguishes between obtaining (*huparchein*) and subsisting (*huphestanai*), such that the past and the future only subsist but never obtain, and the present alone obtains. The distinction is then compared to how *katēgorēmata* subsist and also sometimes obtain:

only the present obtains, he says, whereas the past and the future subsist, but in no way obtain. Just as also only *katēgorēmata* which are what-has-happened (*sumbebēkota*) are said to obtain, for instance walking obtains for me when I am walking, but does not obtain when I am lying down or sitting.⁸⁸

A *katēgorēma* is said to obtain only under particular circumstances, namely when it is true with respect of something else, in the example of the text, of a person. It follows that the *katēgorēma* can also not obtain when it is not true of something. It nevertheless is real, as the past and the future are real, though differently from the present. That difference is captured by the distinction between obtaining and subsisting. In the passage, the status of obtaining is a particular mode of reality reserved for the present only, in comparison with the subsistence of past and future. From the outset, the past and the future share one characteristic in common: they are not actual.⁸⁹ It is in this respect that the past and the future, in contrast to the present, are like *katēgorēmata* which subsist in contrast to *katēgorēmata* which obtain. The *katēgorēmata* which obtain are characterized as the what-has-happened, they are *sumbebēkota*, a term familiar from the text examined earlier on the causal relation, ascribed to Zeno, who says a cause is a cause of a what-has-happened before introducing the more specifically Stoic term '*katēgorēma*' (cf. 7.3 above).

⁸⁸ Stob. *Ecl.* 1.8.42.37–43: 'Μόνον δ' ὑπάρχειν φησὶ τὸν ἐνεστώτα, τὸν δὲ παρωχημένον καὶ τὸν μέλλοντα ὑφεστάναι μὲν, ὑπάρχειν δὲ οὐδαμῶς, <εἰσι> ὡς καὶ κατηγορήματα ὑπάρχειν λέγεται μόνον τὰ συμβεβηκότα, οἷον τὸ περιπατεῖν ὑπάρχει μοι ὅτε περιπατῶ, ὅτε δὲ κατακέκλιμαι ἢ κάθημαι οὐχ ὑπάρχει'. There are some problems with the text, which also breaks off at the end of this passage, see note in LONG & SEDLEY 1987 vol.2. 51B. The comparative structure is however clear, and the translation here is concerned mainly to bring it out.

⁸⁹ There is no trace in our sources that a particular nuance is intended by the use of the perfect infinitive 'ὑφεστάναι' here rather than the present tense which is used in most other relevant texts (e.g. the present participle 'ὑφιστάμενα' for *lekta* at D.L. 7.63). It would seem that, with reference to time, the perfect form is preferred, cf. Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1081C and 1081F discussing past and future which are said to 'ὑφεστάναι'. In the following, however, we shall not consider the distinction relevant to the discussion of *lekta* in particular.

There is a further trace of this use of ‘*sumbebēkos*’ in a passage from S.E. in which the corresponding verbal form, in the perfect tense, is used to convey the similar literal sense we have been sticking to here, i.e. as that which has happened to something:

‘this one is sitting’ or ‘this one is walking’, they say, obtain as true, whenever the *katēgorēma*, e.g. to be sitting or to walk has happened to what falls under the demonstrative indicator⁹⁰

The formulation in S.E. reads like an expanded version of the line from Stobaeus just quoted above: ‘only *katēgorēmata* which are what-has-happened are said to obtain’. The examples also are identical. In both these texts, to have happened and the what-has-happened play a role of testimony to a relation between the obtaining of a *katēgorēma* and that to which something has happened in such a way that a *katēgorēma* is said truly of something. There are *katēgorēmata*, and some are also *sumbebēkota*.

Of the four incorporeals, the distinction between obtaining and subsisting is applied in particular to time and *lekta*. Void and place, as far as our sources go, are repeatedly said to have *hupostasis*, subsistence, which fixes their status as distinct incorporeal items in reality, but they never seem to be also characterized as having *huparxis*, i.e. obtaining.⁹¹ Does obtaining exclude subsistence? There is no reason to think so. Time subsists, and in addition the present time also obtains. In the same way *katēgorēmata* subsist and some also obtain.⁹² Subsistence is thus the basic common status which all incorporeals have. Thus Galen refers to the Stoics as dividing the constituents of reality between ‘what exists and what subsists’.⁹³

The interpretation of the distinction between obtaining and subsisting greatly depends on the view one takes about the particular use the Stoics reserve for ‘obtaining’. In the previous section, we have argued for a well-rounded, and invested, usage of ‘obtaining’ in the precise context of discussions of the ontological status of states-of-affairs: the states-of-affairs which are the case, on the basis of a relation between a *katēgorēma* and something in

⁹⁰ S.E. M. 8.100: ‘τὸ “οὗτος κἀθήται” ἢ “οὗτος περιπατεῖ”, τότε φασὶν ἀληθὲς ὑπάρχειν, ὅταν τῷ ὑπὸ τὴν δεξιὴν πίπτοντι συμβεβήκη τὸ κατηγορήμα, οἷον τὸ καθῆσθαι ἢ τὸ περιπατεῖν’.

⁹¹ Thus place is said to ‘*parhuphistanai*’, ‘subsist’ in Simplicius in *Cat.* 361.10–1; Chrysippus, in *Stob. Ecl.* 1.18.4d.18, says of void that it has ‘its own subsistence (*hupostasis*)’; Cleomedes *Cael.* 1.1.64–5 affirms that ‘ἀναγκαῖον τοῖνυν εἶναί τινα ὑπόστασιν κενού’, ‘it is necessary that void possesses a state of subsistence’ (see BOWEN & TODD 2004 p.25).

⁹² See on this point SCHOFIELD 1988 p.349 with n.20 and ALGRA 1995 *esp.* pp.309–10 and 319–20 on the compatibility of the status of void with *lekta* and time.

⁹³ Galen *Meth. Med.* 10.155.7–8, rebuking the Stoics for making such a pettifoggish distinction (*‘micrologia’*): ‘λέγω δὲ μικρολογίαν, ἐν ᾗ διαίρουσιν κατὰ γένη τὸ τε ὃν καὶ τὸ ὑφεστός’, ‘I mean the hair-splitting distinction by which they divide things into kinds, what exists on the one hand, what subsists on the other’. That Galen deems the distinction of little or no importance shows how real subsistent things are considered by the Stoics, so much so that, for Galen, there is no reason to distinguish them from the things said to exist.

respect of which it holds. It follows that the *katēgorēma* is then also that which is true of something—as we shall see in the next section, it then constitutes a proposition. On this understanding, moreover, a possible overlap can be envisaged between obtaining states-of-affairs and facts, as they are described in twentieth-century philosophical logic, as suggested at the end of the previous section. Causation is a model case since it guarantees the relation between a *katēgorēma* and the passive element. Qualifying the *katēgorēma* as a ‘what-has-happened’ (Chrysippus in Stobaeus), or describing the relation of the *katēgorēma* to that in respect of which it holds as ‘having happened’ to something (S.E.), play a similar role as guarantor of status as that played by the cause.

In comparing *katēgorēmata* which obtain to the present time, Chrysippus indicates that the *katēgorēmata* can help explain how obtaining and subsisting applies to time, and not vice versa. It is thus the reality of obtaining states-of-affairs which serves as the paradigm for the status of obtaining. This indicates that paradigmatically obtaining corresponds to the relation which a *katēgorēma* stands in with respect to that of which it has been caused to obtain, that is to say: the actualization of a state-of-affairs. This is verified in the present time, and it is verified with obtaining *katēgorēmata*. Subsistence, by contrast, captures the states or relations things are in, but does not indicate anything about their actual standing.

In the scholarly literature, the distinction between obtaining and subsisting is sometimes taken on the contrary to concern a restricted problem about the present time, in particular concerning the question of the divisibility of the present. On this view, obtaining comes as a solution to a puzzle about time. For the Stoics, on a strict view of infinite divisibility, the present should neither exist nor subsist in any way. Thus Plutarch confronts the Stoics by concluding that since ‘they do not admit of a minimal time’ (*elachiston chronon*) there can be no such thing as the present time, but only the past and the future subsist.⁹⁴ Plutarch warily mentions Chrysippus’ solution: he calls it ‘*philotechnein*’, which, in the mouth of Plutarch, talking about Chrysippus, is not a compliment but a critical comment about Chrysippus’ (presumably over-) ‘fondness for technicalities’. He reports the Chrysippean solution that the present in fact obtains, as we find it reported by Stobaeus.⁹⁵

The case of time obtaining for the Stoics has constituted in the literature a point from which to argue that to obtain is not an ontological status.

⁹⁴ Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1081C: ‘τὸ μὲν ἄρτι καὶ τὸ πρόην ὑφίστανται, τὸ δὲ νῦν ὅλως μηδὲν εἶναι’, ‘the recently and the other day subsist, but the now is nothing at all’.

⁹⁵ Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1081F: ‘τὸ μὲν παρωχημένον τοῦ χρόνου καὶ τὸ μέλλον οὐχ ὑπάρχειν ἀλλ’ ὑφίστηκέναι φησί, μόνον δ’ ὑπάρχειν τὸ ἐνεστηκός’, ‘the past part of time (“*meros*” is used before and after these lines), and the future do not obtain, but subsist, he says, whereas only the present obtains’. Plutarch does not elaborate on this but rather pursues further the attack on the contradiction of the two claims.

Goldschmidt (1972 p.336f.) takes '*huparchein*' to have a wide application, appealing to its use in the definition of the *kataleptic* impression, which is said to come about '*apo huparchontos*', 'from what is the case' (cf. 2.2.7 above), or, for Goldschmidt, a less committing translation: 'from what is present'. Different source texts are brought in, in which, at times, what is indicated as a '*huparchon*', which triggers an impression, is understood as 'what is true' ('*e vero*', in Cic. *Acad.* 2.42); in other texts, the *huparchon* from which an impression arises seems to be a corporeal object, e.g. Electra whom Orestes really sees.⁹⁶ From this, Goldschmidt suggests that '*huparchein*' is used to designate anything corporeal or incorporeal, as long as it is a something, *ti*, which is actually present. Correspondingly, present time '*huparchei*', is real insofar as it has an extension, i.e. it constitutes a continuous stretch of time. This is its actuality (*huparxis*) which, on this reading, is framed by what is actually present (the items present here and now), and which can be perceived. The distinction with *huphistanai*, to subsist, is analysed in terms of the *huparxis*, or actual presence of bodies and/or incorporeals, compared to *hupostasis*, which indicates existence in mere thoughts alone. Incorporeals, on this reading, are thus relegated to purely mental existence, whenever they do not *huparchein* (obtain), as for instance, the past and the future.

On this interpretation, subsistence is dependent on our thinking. The past and the future depend for their subsistence on our thinking of them. In support of this reading, Goldschmidt juxtaposes two uses of the participle '*huphistamenon*' ('subsistent'): the first from a well-rehearsed description of *lekta*, that they are 'that which subsist in correspondence with a rational impression' (D.L. 7.63; S.E. *M.* 8.70, and see 2.2.6 above), and the second, a reference by Proclus to the Stoic view of incorporeals, namely that 'they subsist in our thoughts alone'.⁹⁷ Juxtaposing these two excerpts, Goldschmidt reads the two formulae, 'in correspondence with a rational impression' and 'in thoughts alone', as glosses on the sense of 'subsisting' when applied to incorporeals. They specify explicitly the mind-dependency which subsisting incorporeals are reduced to in such a way that, when 'subsisting' ('*huphistamenon*') is found on its own, in contexts in which incorporeals are discussed, these formulae should actually be implied (Goldschmidt 1972 p.342). Thus 'a subsisting incorporeal' is short for 'subsisting in the mind'. The comparison

⁹⁶ S.E. *M.* 7.245 on Orestes' receiving the impression of his sister, Electra (though in his madness he substitutes her for one of the Furies): '*καθὸ μὲν γὰρ ὡς ἀπὸ ὑπάρχοντός τινος προσέπιπτεν, ἣν ἀληθῆς, ὑπῆρχε γὰρ Ἡλέκτρα*', 'insofar as his impression was of a real object, his impression was true, for Electra was real'.

⁹⁷ Proclus in *Tim.* 3.95.11–14: the context is a discussion of time, of which Proclus remarks that it is: '*ἐν γὰρ ἡν τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς ἀσωμάτων ὁ χρόνος, ὃ δὴ καταπεφρόνηται παρ' αὐτοῖς ὡς ἀδρανῆ καὶ οὐκ ὄντα καὶ ἐν ἐπινοίαις ὑφιστάμενα ψιλαῖς*', 'time, for them (the Stoics) is one amongst the incorporeals, which have been reduced by them to being deprived of agency, to not existing, and to subsist in thoughts alone'.

with *katēgorēmata* in the passage from Stobaeus becomes secondary and valid only insofar as a *katēgorēma* can be said to be actually present in a subject; for, as an incomplete *lekton*, a *katēgorēma* will become complete by inhering in a subject only in the present. It remains incomplete in the past and the future (Goldschmidt 1972 p.340).⁹⁸

A number of questions arise from this interpretation. With regard to the use of '*huparchon*' in the definition of a *kataleptic* impression: saying that Electra, as a corporeal object of perception, is the content of the impression is imprecise. For it seems that, also in the case of impressions which arise from the senses (the sensorial impressions, *phantasiai aisthētikai*, cf. D.L. 7.51), there is a representational stage in the formation of a rational impression. As was discussed in an earlier chapter (2.2.5 above), one of the expressions of the natural development of reason (which cannot be helped) is the propositional articulation of the content of even the most basic sensorial impressions. Thus a perceiver does not see *x* and thereby has an impression of *x*, but rather in seeing *x*, a person has an impression of *x* as something or other (e.g. the object—even if it is itself not identified—as blue). In the case in which the perceiver is sane and awake, he will have an impression of *x* as the *x* it is, i.e. he will have an impression of what is true, or is the case, e.g. for Orestes, of Electra as his sister, or even at a more general level, of this object as a human being. The content of the impression takes the propositional form that this object is a human being. If the perceiver is suffering from some impediment or other, he will have an impression of *x* as what it is not, e.g. of Electra as a Fury.⁹⁹

On a close reading, the Stoics, as they are reported by S.E., deliberately choose to speak of the '*huparchon*' as the basis for a *kataleptic* impression (i.e., one which cannot fail to be an exact representation of what is), because of its specific technical usage. It emphasizes that what a *kataleptic* impression is a reaction to, is something which is the case, or true about an object of perception rather than that object itself.¹⁰⁰ There is therefore no need to

⁹⁸ See SCHUBERT 1994 pp.154–64 speaking of 'immaterial existence' in virtue of a *katēgorēma* being actualized (*realisiert ist*) in an object, on the model of the present time actualized in a material object; but see SCHOFIELD 1988 whose notion of retrenchability of the present precisely counters the projection onto the Stoics of a potential vs actualized reading of the claim that the present alone obtains.

⁹⁹ See S.E. *M.* 7.404–5: in normal conditions we assent to the impression of Dion as Dion, i.e. we assent to the proposition that the Dion we perceive is Dion; in a state of madness such as Heracles' when he kills his children, he has an impression of his own children as the children of Eurystheus, assenting to the false proposition that the children he perceives are the children of Eurystheus. See further FREDE 1987d pp.164–5.

¹⁰⁰ See S.E. *M.* 8.85–6: a persistent critique of the Stoics appeals to '*huparchon*' as the basis of a *kataleptic* impression, but explicitly referred here to the Stoic definition of an *axiōma*, which '*huparchei* (obtains as true), and is opposed to something'. Thus '*huparchon*' is not an existent body for the Stoics, not even from the critical standpoint of S.E. See on this passage BOBZIEN 1986 p.16 on the truth conditions of the corresponding *axiōma*, and see PERRIN 2005 pp.387–91

think that, when Cicero speaks of ‘what is true’ as the basis for a *kataleptic* impression, he is speaking about something different from what we find in the discussions in S.E., or that he is misunderstanding the Stoics.¹⁰¹ The use of the substantivized participle ‘*huparchon*’ in the context of discussion of impressions and the truthfulness of their content, is thus not separate from the use of the verbal form (*huparchei*) when it comes to ascertaining the true ascription of a *katēgorēma*. In these highly specialized contexts, the Stoics appeal to *huparchein* precisely to designate the reality of what is not corporeal though it stands in some determinate relation to the corporeal, such as truths about a perceptible object which correspond to the content of impressions.

This already undermines the distinction Goldschmidt identifies between *huparchein* and *huphistanai*. As for his relegating subsistence to what is in the mind alone, it suffices to mention two main points: (i) one historiographical, the other (ii) doctrinal. For (i), the juxtaposition of well-attested and foundational descriptions of the *lekton* as subsisting according to a rational impression, alongside the cursory, generic, and critical passage from Proclus, is hazardous, to say the least. Proclus’ characterization of incorporeals as ‘subsisting in bare thoughts alone’ is not found in any other source relating to the Stoics. It rather echoes a formula, familiar from Platonizing contexts, to refer to universals as a posteriori mental concepts.¹⁰² Proclus is thus merely relaying a common and highly imprecise misrepresentation of Stoic ontology in

arguing for the *huparchon* as providing the ‘reason’ for a person to assent to the true content of her impression, but not as constituting the content.

¹⁰¹ ALESSANDRELLI 2013 pp.65–70 follows in Goldschmidt’s footsteps, more categorically distinguishing between impressions *apo* (from), which exclusively pick out corporeal objects and are exclusively sensorial, and impressions *epi*, whose distinctive mark is not being sensorial and whose object is an incorporeal *lekton*. Nothing in the texts elicits such a distinction, which not even Goldschmidt endorses. Alessandrelli makes the distinction by pitting together two texts which do not actually address the same question: in D.L. 7.51 where the supposed characterization of the *apo* kind of impression is to be found, which in fact distinguishes impressions whose content ‘is the case’, ‘ἀπὸ ὑπαρχόντων’ (e.g. Orestes correctly recognizing the person in front of him as his sister Electra), from those which are ‘as if they were from what is the case’ (‘ὡσανεὶ ἀπὸ ὑπαρχόντων’). The contrast is not—pace Alessandrelli—between a sensorial impression and a non-sensorial impression (that contrast is made in the previous lines, but not here). As for the *epi* kind of impression, referring to S.E. M. 8.409, the contrast there is not between an *apo*-kind and an *epi*-kind, but between the latter and a *hupo*-kind. As I argued at length in 4.4 above, the question there concerns methods of learning and teaching, which again is not the same thing as a distinction between sensorial and non-sensorial impressions.

¹⁰² GOLDSCHMIDT 1972 n. 168 criticizes HADOT 1969 for appealing to a Neo-Platonic sense of ‘*huphistanai*’ in Stoic contexts, but he himself draws from similar sources to support his own interpretation. The set-formula Goldschmidt talks about, ‘subsisting in bare thoughts’, seems indeed to be a common expression, but not for the Stoics, rather from Platonic or Neo-Platonic texts, of which the passage from Proclus is but one example, another is from the famous introductory lines of Porphyry’s *Isagoge* (1.9–10), from which stem the questions about what universals can be: the first alternative about what genera and species are is thus set between ‘existing’ or ‘being in bare thoughts alone’. See BARNES 2003 pp.40–1 for further references to the widespread usage of the expression.

Platonic spheres, in which incorporeality is mixed up with the Stoic talk of the Platonic Forms as concepts which are relegated to purely mind-dependent existence (see 3.3.3 above).

As for (ii), there is no parallel between the two passages in any case. As we have seen, there are difficulties with the '*kata*' ('in correspondence with'), which is supposed to capture the relation of the *lekton* to the content of the impression. But in any event it cannot be assimilated to the relation of 'being in' (expressed by '*en*' in Proclus) which distinctly places what is in our thoughts in a relation of dependence on our thought. True enough, Goldschmidt means to clarify the '*kata*' relation by the '*en*' relation, but then why would the Stoics not simply have said that *lekta* are *in* rational impressions? They do not. They say that 'impressions are in (*en*) the soul' (D.L. 7.50), but not *lekta*. On Goldschmidt's reading, *lekta* are identifiable with impressions, more specifically rational impressions, which the Stoics say are thoughts. If *lekta* are nothing more than thoughts, however, we are back to the Peripatetic account (cf. 6.3 above). There is, however, overwhelming evidence that impressions, and thoughts, as one kind of impression, are corporeal dispositions of the soul (see 2.2.3 above). Talk of subsistence for *lekta* at the very least serves to distinguish *lekta* from the corporeal impressions. Thus, at the very least, subsistence corresponds to a state of not being corporeal, and of not being in the soul. Thus, as argued for in earlier chapters, the characteristic of rational impressions, i.e. thoughts, is that their internal structure corresponds to a *lekton*, because thinking, on this view, is to grasp (most of the time very badly) the logical structures of reality, which are the *lekta*. These *lekta* subsist, therefore, independently of our minds. This is what makes them available to us to think or say when we do. But *lekta* subsist whether we think or say them, or not.

Interpretations in the literature which defend some form or other of a dependence account of incorporeals on bodies all run into similar difficulties when it comes to discussing the distinction between *huparchein* and *huphistanai*. Thus Bailey 2014, in contrast to Goldschmidt, aims to keep to a wholly uniform account of *huparchein*. As mentioned above, his strategy consists in transposing the analogy of occupied/empty to all the four incorporeals, thereby transforming it into a metaphor rather than an explanative or logical tool. To be occupied is to obtain, on this reading. The analogy—it should be said—is nowhere present in our sources, and there are no texts in which place (*topos*), described as 'that which is occupied by a being, [...] (which is now called body)' (S.E. M. 10.3) is said to *huparchei*, obtain, in virtue of being occupied. The result of this reading is that *huparchein* expresses the dependence of the incorporeal on a body in order to be real; whereas *huphistanai* is not indicative of a status in itself, but of a shadow state into which incorporeals land before and after a body comes to actualize them (by occupying them). It is not by chance that Bailey does not discuss the relation of *lekta* which subsist

according to rational impressions. Subsistence on his account is indeterminate, since the only things which give a positive characterization to incorporeals are the bodies which make the incorporeal the particular incorporeal it is: the space that it is, the *lekton* that it is, the time that it is.¹⁰³

7.6.4. Conclusions

There is no reason to suppose that when the Stoics speak of *huparchein* for *lekta* and time, they thereby suggest that a *lekton* and the present time cease to subsist, for as long as they obtain. Though one can only agree with Bailey that before and after an incorporeal obtains, it subsists, the relation, and indeed difference, between obtaining and subsisting is much more one of compatibility rather than of opposites. To see this, one has to change perspective and relinquish the reverse-Platonism reading that underlies the dependence theory. This recalibration consists on the one hand, in removing the onus from the corporeal to determine the status of obtaining: for bodies are not more fundamental than the incorporeals. On the other hand, when it comes to determining what subsistence consists in for incorporeals, this must take into account a relation to bodies as the other constituents of reality.

Thus, though paradigmatically obtaining is framed by a causal relation (such that a *katēgorēma* obtains with respect to a body, which is the passive element, conjoined to the active cause), it is itself a state distinct from that passive body. Obtaining is not determined by the presence or existence of that passive body, since there are states-of-affairs which obtain without there being a passive body there, or at the very least without there being a directly identifiable passive body: e.g. the state-of-affairs according to which time is a continuum.

Once obtaining is understood as an ontological status in itself, two key features of Stoic ontology fall into place at the same time. Firstly, incorporeals have an independent ontological status. They subsist. It is impossible that some incorporeals have some form of reality which others do not. Secondly, existence and subsistence are parallel and correlated modes of reality. Bodies and incorporeals co-constitute reality, such that existence and subsistence are complementary. That is to say, things cannot exist without other things subsisting and vice versa. There is a certain configuration of that complementarity which is crystallized by *lekta* obtaining.

That of all incorporeals only *lekta* and the present time obtain says something mostly about the present time, namely that its obtaining is connected

¹⁰³ As for void, BAILEY 2014 pp.274–5 sees void as occupied by space and therefore, at two removes, by a body.

to the obtaining *katēgorēmata* and *lekta*. For there is a tie, emphasized by Goldschmidt too, between the actuality of the present time and the actualization of obtaining *katēgorēma*, i.e., the corresponding actual state-of-affairs.¹⁰⁴ It is a tie which points to two further developments. For one, an account of tenses of verbs governed by truth conditions which themselves are re-articulations of logical, i.e. ontological, differences between actual state-of-affairs and those which are not actual.¹⁰⁵ The question related to tenses is beyond the scope of this work, since it also involves a serious analysis of time. It is clear that such an analysis will need to involve a discussion of *lekta*, insofar as the density or 'retrenchability' (to quote Schofield 1988) of time is governed by the reality, and different modes of reality, of *katēgorēmata* and *lekta*.¹⁰⁶ The second observation follows from this, namely that *lekta*, from amongst the four incorporeals, stand out precisely because they also obtain. *Lekta* constitute the privileged configurations of the relations between the constituents of reality. It is in this perspective that they are thus the keystone of the Stoic *systema*.

¹⁰⁴ SCHOFIELD 1988 p.356: the use of '*huparchein*' to characterize the present is 'not merely analogous but parasitical to its application on *katēgorēmata*'.

¹⁰⁵ Thus LONG 1971b p.89: the present tense of expressions which describes the reality of the present. Truth conditions of propositions expressed in the past tense are then analysed in terms of a temporal quantifier which governs the whole proposition: e.g. in the past (Socrates drinks wine), but on the problems with this see BOBZIEN 1986 pp.22–30 arguing that if time is taken as a function, the overall product no longer satisfies the Stoic criteria of an *axiōma*. Alex. in *An. Pr.* 403.11–26 turns this discussion into a variation on the famous puzzle on the truth conditions of 'Socrates is dead' (rehearsed by him earlier at *in An. Pr.* 177.30–2 and ff.), this time with the added question about the possibility of the truth of an assertion about the past, namely that 'Socrates died': Alexander argues that the recourse to a temporal quantifier is ultimately reducible to an analysis of proper names and the conditions for reference, which thus excludes propositions of the kind [Socrates died] from changing their truth-value; see on this FREDE 1974 p.46. On the temporal indications of proper names see LLOYD 2007 p.231 and BRUNDSCHWIG 1995a p.135.

¹⁰⁶ On the grounding role of *lekta* for grammatical distinctions between aspects see FREDE 1987b p.307 and FREDE 1993 pp.143–4.

Lekta and the Foundations of a Theory of Language

8.1. FROM *KATĒGORĒMA* TO *AXIŌMA*

We have been speaking of *katēgorēmata*, states-of-affairs, *lekta*, and *axiōmata* (propositions) in a way which suggests that there are solid grounds for moving easily from one to the other. These solid grounds are first and foremost evidenced within the Stoic account of causation. As we have seen, the causal analysis is the privileged context in which to prove and establish the reality of *katēgorēmata*. It is consonant, therefore, that the shift from speaking about *katēgorēmata* to *lekta*, and in particular *axiōmata*, should first occur in the privileged and guaranteed context of causation.

Thus S.E. (*PH* 3.14, cf. 7.3 above), discussing causation, speaks of the Stoic view of what causes are of by giving as an example that the sun is the cause of a piece of wax being melted. The effect thus articulated has a propositional form, namely that the wax is melted.¹ He subsequently gives the Stoic analysis of the account as the sun being the cause of the *katēgorēma*, to be melted. The shift from one formulation to the other is a shift towards a more complete and inclusive articulation of the causal schema. It is presumably in this perspective that Cleanthes, named by Clement as the earliest Stoic to have spoken of *lekta*,² does so in saying that causes are causes of *katēgorēmata* or of *lekta*. This is not a particularly bold step. The cause causes a *katēgorēma* to obtain at the same time as something else thereby becomes the passive element in a three-tiered relation binding cause, *katēgorēma*, and passive body. In obtaining with respect to that passive element, the *katēgorēma* is said of something in virtue of the *katēgorēma* obtaining with respect to the passive body. Thus, whilst the *katēgorēma*, being melted, obtains with respect to the wax, at the same time

¹ S.E. *PH* 3.14: ‘τοῦ χεῖσθαι τὸν κηρόν’. The article here in the genitive as that of which the cause is cause, indicates the relation of the proposition to the cause (as that *of which*), and serves to introduce the infinitival clause which is built on a propositional articulation in which the subject is in the accusative (τὸν κηρόν); see KUHNER & GERTH vol 2. §651.3a.

² Clem. *Strom.* 8.9.26.4; see 7.1.1 with n.4 above.

the *axiōma* that the wax is melted obtains and is true. Thus the wax which is now a component of an *axiōma* in the proposition that the wax is melted, is something distinct from the actual wax.

The shift from talk of a *katēgorēma* to talk of an *axiōma* covers a question which is first of ontological, then eventually of linguistic concern. Namely, what is the status of the wax within the *axiōma*? It appears, to all intents and purposes, to be something distinct from the actual wax, and is governed by its being that which the *katēgorēma* is said of.

8.1.1. Being Said of Something: an Ontological Structure

The relation of being said of something, does not refer to utterance. It is a question, first and foremost, of true attribution. This is the grounding for the Stoic notion of a *katēgorēma*, reflected in the remotivated etymology the Stoics propose, by which the word '*katēgorēma*' is broken down into *kata tinos agoreuomenon* (cf. 7.6.1 with n.80 above). But it is not lexical morphology which matters here.³ For the Stoics mean thereby to capture that, at the level of the reality, i.e. the subsistence of the *katēgorēma*, its very subsistence is articulated in terms of its being said of something—something which is neither an utterance nor a thing in itself, but entirely determined by being that of which the *katēgorēma* is said. There is no such thing, in reality, as a *katēgorēma* which is not said of something.⁴ This relation is the nucleus which constitutes an *axiōma*. For an *axiōma* is the sort of thing in which something is said of something.

As already suggested at 5.1.1 above, this is the lesson learnt from Plato about what 'to say' implies: namely that the 'said of' relation is primordial. The Stoic contribution to this Platonic insight (discussed on the basis of Plato's *Sophist* 262d4) is to distribute into ontological categories the roles and functions of the 'said of' relation. (i) The primordial relation of 'said of' is a two place relation xRy by which a *katēgorēma*, x , is said of y , where y 's status is entirely dependent and inseparable from xR . This relation marks out the fundamental articulation of an *axiōma*. Nothing corporeal constitutes an *axiōma*. (ii) It then turns out that it is a relation which is expressible and thus can be expressed. Whichever

³ The Stoics repeatedly practise backward etymologies, rediscovering in morphology or morphogony a primordial order or wisdom which their own theoretical accounts are shown to recover; this practice does not however play a central role in their doctrine, see further ALLEN 2005.

⁴ The 'uncombined *katēgorēma*' (D.L. 7.58) figures in a classification of grammatical terms (namely as what is signified by verbs). Before we can discuss the correspondence of language with reality (i.e. the expression of *lekta*), we must therefore belabour the structural articulations of ontology, distinct and predominant over the further developments of a theory of language and grammar, on which see chapter 9.

the mode of expression used (speech, hand-gestures, choreography, and so on: see 4.4.1 above), it is corporeal. (iii) It also turns out that everything which is real stands in some configuration of this primordial relation. That is to say that each and every body and each and every incorporeal has (depending on the thing it is) a set of xRy relations which obtain with respect to it and which are true of it, and also a set of xRy relations which subsist and can obtain, and a set which subsist and can never obtain. For this is what it is to be a constituent of reality: namely, to stand in relation to structures of the form xRy.

These structures are the propositional articulations which rational beings grasp, but they need neither be known, said, or thought by anyone—apart from, presumably, God, who as the active cosmic principle produces all there is through his action on passive matter. He is thus the first cause.⁵ These are the structures which language expresses, and all that language has to express. They are all there is to say, and the role of language is to express these structures. Hence these structures, which are not expressions but ontological items, are the *lekta*. The *lekta* are there to be said, and they are all there is to say. When we say something, namely a *lekton*, we thereby capture something distinct from the language we use, belonging to a different ontological category, which is governed by different criteria and modalities from the category of corporeals to which the language we use belongs.

Thus, if not from the very start with Zeno (we cannot be sure for lack of textual evidence), then by the time of Cleanthes, the primordial relation xRy, identified in the causal relation, and which structures reality, is designated as a *lekton*. A *lekton* is not something produced or created by language; it is sometimes picked out by language. But neither can the *lekton* be something which depends on language. For it is an ontological item which has a fundamental structure in which a *katēgorēma* is said of something. We are yet to discuss the question of complete and incomplete *lekta*, which will be addressed in 8.2.1 below. One of the claims of this book is that there are no incomplete *lekta* in reality, and therefore no *katēgorēmata* which are not in a ‘said of’ relation with something (whether the *katēgorēma* obtains or not). Complete and incomplete are descriptives which intervene at the level of the expression of a given *lekton*. For now, since we are focusing on the items that constitute reality, it is sufficient to observe the grounds on which talk of *katēgorēmata* legitimately merges into talk of *lekta* and *axiōmata*.⁶ They are the same ontological item considered from different perspectives.

⁵ D.L. 7.134: ‘διὰ πάσης αὐτῆς δημιουργεῖν ἕκαστα’, ‘he creates every single thing throughout the whole of matter’. In D.L. 7.138–9 God is compared to the soul in us, and is thus the internal cause of the cosmos’s being alive, since ‘the cosmos is a living being’. The day God ceases his activity, the cosmos perishes, and this is the conflagration, *ekpurōsis* (D.L. 7.134).

⁶ We shall keep to the transliterated form ‘*axiōma*’ for the same reasons we keep to the transliterated ‘*katēgorēma*’: these terms designate items in ontology (they are kinds of *lekta*) and are not to be confused with the semantic connotations of the terms ‘proposition’ and ‘predicate’.

A last remark concerns the maximality factor: that *lekta* are *all* there is to say. This is not a concessive ‘all’, i.e. an acknowledgement of a shortcoming of ours, or of language. It is not that, limited as we are, we can only say *lekta*, whereas other more capable beings such as God have other things available, but rather that the whole of reality is constituted by *lekta* and we can say and think them. Thus, built into the very notion of a *lekton* is that the whole structure of reality is what the rational inhabitants of that structure have to think about, talk about, and act in accordance with. Thinking, talking, and acting are precisely the activities which distinguish rational beings; in fact, they are all that human beings do.⁷ It is the whole structure of reality which is available to its rational inhabitants, whose rationality is characterized by their having the means to grasp it. This availability is what guarantees that it is possible for us to make progress (cf. 4.3 and 4.4.4 above). Language can question, assert, command, lie, marvel at these structures. But these structures are what there is to say.

8.1.2. The *Axiōma*

The xRy relation corresponds to the propositional articulation, which is the structural basis of the ontological framework. It is not the articulation of the *axiōma*.⁸ The *axiōma* is one articulation of the relation of the *katēgorēma* to that of which it is said; it takes the form [y φ -ies], where φ -ies covers any kind of *katēgorēma*, forming a syntactical nucleus with the y it is said of. Thus, if some wax is melting by the fire, then the *katēgorēma* [melting] obtains with respect to the wax, such that [the wax is melting] is an *axiōma* which is true, in which melting is said of the wax. What is y in the xRy relation, of which the *katēgorēma* is said? It cannot be the actual wax, which is a body and cannot be present within an incorporeal *axiōma*.

As we saw in the previous chapter (*esp.* 7.6.2 above), the answer to this question has been sought by some interpreters in a recourse to what is corporeal: the *katēgorēma* is said of a body when the *lekton* obtains, and it

⁷ D.L. 7.157; Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 903A–C: human beings distinguish themselves by the ‘highest part in their soul’, the commanding faculty, *hēgemonikon*, which governs the faculties of speech and reasoning: the former consists of ‘breath (*pneuma*) extending from the commanding faculty to the tongue and other associated organs’, which makes speech the preeminent mode of expression for human beings; reasoning covers impressions, assents, perceptions, and impulses. There are also, in addition (since there are eight parts or functions of the soul), the five senses and the seminal or generative faculty. The five senses have direct influence on the reasoning activities; the human seed less so, though its role is to transmit the configuration of the parent soul to the offspring (D.L. 7.159) and it therefore contains the higher faculties.

⁸ See 2.2.4.2–3 above on the distinction between propositional form and the proposition.

fails to obtain precisely in the absence of a body. But this is not consonant with what we find in the texts and does not make for a plausible propositional logic. Before dismissing the Stoics, we should pursue the investigation further. The disappointing account the dependence theory yields relies on the hierarchical interpretation of the status of obtaining, dependent on bodies. But, as we have seen, there are grounds to consider that for the Stoics, corporeals and incorporeals share parallel status in ontology. Taking this parallel status on board leads to an important shift of perspective. It yields a different account of the distinctness of the *axiōma* and its components from the external items, of which the *axiōma* might be true or false.

Axiōmata are ontological items, which first and foremost are configured in relation to the other co-constituents of reality. The truth and falsity of *axiōmata* are derived from these configurations. Thus, in obtaining, an *axiōma* is true, and it is false when it does not obtain:

true, for them, is that which obtains and is the opposite of something; and false, that which does not obtain and is the opposite of something. For this constitutes precisely an incorporeal *axiōma*, which can be thought of.⁹

By ‘opposite’ S.E. is here describing the negation of the *axiōma*, thus the opposite of [a φ -ies] is not[a φ -ies]. These are not truth conditions of *axiōmata*, but rather the original Stoic commitment to the correlation between ontological status, and truth and falsity.¹⁰ What he further indicates is the inseparability of whatever ‘a’ is with regard to the *katēgorēma* said of it. He confirms thereby that this relation is nuclear. For it is the unit, which constitutes an *axiōma*, which is negated when it comes to setting out the pairs of opposites. Since every *axiōma* is either true or false,¹¹ there will always be an *axiōma* which obtains (and is therefore true) and an opposite which subsists, and is false. This means that these non-obtaining *axiōmata* are real. Moreover, the *katēgorēma* contained within the non-obtaining *axiōma* is consistently and always said of something ‘a’. This something ‘a’ therefore cannot be something external to the *axiōma*, neither a body, nor anything distinct from the *axiōma*.

In his discussion of *lekta* in his *Letter 117*, much discussed already in the previous chapter, Seneca focuses on one main distinction the account is grounded on, namely between the body Cato is, which Seneca says he perceives

⁹ S.E. M. 8.10: ‘ἀληθὲς γὰρ ἔστι κατ’ αὐτοὺς τὸ ὑπάρχον καὶ ἀντικείμενόν τινι, καὶ ψεῦδος τὸ μὴ ὑπάρχον καὶ [μὴ] ἀντικείμενόν τινι· ὅπερ ἀσώματον ἀξίωμα καθεστὼς νοητὸν εἶναι’.

¹⁰ Thus BOBZIEN 1986 p.16 emphasizes that this passage is not establishing truth criteria, but the criterion by which something counts as an *axiōma*; see also BARNES 2007 pp.1–6 on the particularity of the Stoic characterization of the *axiōma*, which, though it overlaps with a principle of bivalence, has its own stringent requirements rooted in ontology.

¹¹ D.L. 7.65; Cic. *Fat.* 21.

(‘*quod video*’, ‘which I see’) and that which corresponds to Cato’s actually walking, something which is not a body, and which Seneca ‘gets said’ (‘*quod loquor*’). There is, he concludes,

a great difference between the thing you get said, and that about whom you say it.¹²

The difference Seneca is concerned with is the one between a body and an incorporeal: what we say or we get said is an incorporeal thing. Seneca does not have a clear term by which to designate what this thing is but he offers a few candidates: ‘*enuntiativum quiddam*’ (‘something declarative of something’), ‘*effatum*’ (‘something said’), ‘*enuntiatum*’ (‘something declared’), ‘*dictum*’ (‘something said’). These attempts show the difficulty Seneca has in capturing in Latin what we recognize as the *lekton*. The main characteristic for Seneca is its distinction from the corporeal body, which the *lekton* is ‘about’. The *lekton*, which we get said and stands in a relation to the body Cato, itself has nothing corporeal about it. This implies on the one hand that the reality conditions for the *lekton* are different from those governing the body Cato. On the other hand, it also requires that an account be given of the relation between the Cato figuring within the *lekton* and Cato the man himself, which guarantees that there be something successfully conveyed, i.e. something said, by uttering the sentence ‘Cato is walking’.

Seneca enables us to articulate a crucial juncture in the analysis of *lekta*. It comes down to a characterization of *lekta* as ontological items on the one hand, and items whose characteristics ground a theory of language on the other. For the Stoics, fundamentally, the one implies the other and vice versa insofar as (as we have seen above) what there is to say is what there is; and what there is, is *lekta* subsisting, and sometimes obtaining, with respect to external objects. Thus states-of-affairs or states-of-reality are designated as *lekta* because that is what there is to say.

There is enough evidence to show that the Stoics develop an account specifically aimed at answering questions about the production of meaningful speech. They set out, in this way, the foundations for a theory of language and a theory of grammar in which are articulated the terms by which, through speech, we pick out an item in reality, the *lekton*, and associate it truthfully or not with (typically) a body which it is about. The Stoics provide such an account with the notion of a *tunchanon*, the third item which is ‘yoked’ to the *lekton* and to the signifier. One of our main source texts on this third item is also one of the more famous passages concerning *lekta*. It raises a number of questions, however, to which we shall now turn.

¹² Sen. *Ep.* 117.13: ‘plurimum autem interest utrum illud dicas an de illo’.

8.1.3. In Language ‘Three Things are Yoked Together’, S.E. M. 8.11–12

In an often quoted passage, S.E. marks out the *lekton* as one of a set of three interconnected things which are ‘yoked together’: the signifier, the signified (which is the *lekton*), and what S.E. refers to as, in Greek, the *tunchanon*, which we shall begin here by literally translating as ‘that which has it’; this translation, however, will evolve over the following analysis into ‘the case-bearer’:

Three things are yoked one to another: what is signified, what signifies, and that-which-has-it. Of these, what signifies is the utterance, e.g. ‘Dion’, what is signified is the thing itself which has been revealed by the utterance and which, as it subsists in correspondence with our thought, we grasp—foreigners do not understand it, despite the fact that they can hear the sound. That-which-has-it is the external object, like Dion himself.

Of these, two are corporeal, the utterance and that-which-has-it, one is incorporeal, namely the thing which is signified, i.e. a *lekton*, which comes to be true or false. Moreover, not every *lekton* is true or false, but some are incomplete, and others are self-complete. And of the self-complete, it is what is called the *axiōma*, and which they describe by saying that an *axiōma* is that which is either true or false.¹³

This passage is often considered as exemplifying the strict distinctions which characterize the Stoic account of *lekta*: namely the distinctions between expressions, *lekta*, and objects in the world.¹⁴ S.E.’s report, in effect, affirms and confirms distinctions we have discussed in earlier chapters: the distinction between utterances and *lekta* as discussed at length in chapter 5, as well as the mind-independence of *lekta*, whose status as subsistent incorporeal items (in contrast to bodies) is recalled here and highlighted by the fact that only people who understand the language can grasp the *lekton*, which otherwise remains out of reach for those who do not speak the language (3.3 and 4.3 above). The specificity and importance of the passage reside in its associating in addition the *tunchanon*, that-which-has-it, the third thing. It is the relation of this third thing, the *tunchanon*, with the *lekton* which has become the most pressing point to examine.

¹³ S.E. M. 8.11–12: ‘τρία φάμενοι συζυγεῖν ἀλλήλοις, τό τε σημαίνόμενον καὶ τὸ σημαῖνον καὶ τὸ τυγχάνον, ὧν σημαῖνον μὲν εἶναι τὴν φωνήν, ὅλον τὴν Δίωιν, σημαίνόμενον δὲ αὐτὸ τὸ πρᾶγμα τὸ ὑπ’ αὐτῆς δηλούμενον καὶ οὐ ἡμεῖς μὲν ἀντιλαμβανόμεθα τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ παρφυσισταμένῳ διανοίᾳ, οἱ δὲ βάρβαροι οὐκ ἐπαῖουσι καίπερ τῆς φωνῆς ἀκούοντες, τυγχάνον δὲ τὸ ἐκτὸς ὑποκείμενον, ὥσπερ αὐτὸς ὁ Δίων. τούτων δὲ δύο μὲν εἶναι σώματα, καθάπερ τὴν φωνήν καὶ τὸ τυγχάνον, ἐν δὲ ἀσώματον, ὥσπερ τὸ σημαίνόμενον πρᾶγμα, καὶ λεκτόν, ὅπερ ἀληθές τε γίνεται ἢ ψεῦδος. καὶ τοῦτο οὐ κοινῶς πᾶν, ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν ἑλλιπές, τὸ δὲ αὐτοτελές. καὶ τοῦ αὐτοτελοῦς τὸ καλούμενον ἀξίωμα, ὅπερ καὶ ὑπογράφοντές φασιν “ἀξίωμα ἐστὶν ὃ ἐστὶν ἀληθές ἢ ψεῦδος”.

¹⁴ LONG 1971b p.77; GRAESER 1977 p.379; DETEL et al. 1980 p.284; FREDE 1994a p.118; GASKIN 1997 p.94.

8.1.3.1. *The Tunchanon: a Peculiar Term*

From the three things listed, the *tunchanon* corresponds to something distinct from the pair signifier—signified. It would thus be straightforward to associate it with the external object. If we think of the causal schema as a paradigmatic frame in which three things are involved (the active body, that of which it is a cause, and the passive body), the *tunchanon* would seem to coincide with the passive body, i.e. that in respect of which a *katēgorēma* obtains. In Seneca's analysis in *Ep.* 117.13 of Cato who is walking, the *tunchanon* would seem to coincide with Cato the man, whom Seneca sees, and whom Seneca contrasts with what gets said, namely that Cato is walking. There are but a handful of texts which report the Stoic use of *tunchanon*. However, none of them, including, as we shall see, S.E.'s report here, hand down an account of the *tunchanon* that is quite as straightforward as the three-tiered account would seem to be at first blush.

In other testimonies in which the Stoic appeal to a *tunchanon* is mentioned, commentators have drawn the straightforward conclusion that this is what the Stoics call the external thing. Thus, in a passage from Themistius (*in An. Pr.* 92.1–3, mentioned at 6.3.3 with n.72 above), in which Stoic and Aristotelian terminologies are compared, the term '*tunchanon*' is singled out as the Stoic equivalent of the Peripatetic use of '*pragma*', which designates, on the Aristotelian view, the external object in the world (in contrast to words and thoughts). The passage is a brief aside and is not accurate (*lekta* are presented as the Stoic version for the Aristotelian 'words' ('*phōnai*')). But, as with the term '*lekton*' which it records, the mention of '*tunchanon*' is enough to ascertain that this is a well-known and peculiar Stoic usage. The same evidence for a specifically Stoic use is given by Plutarch in *Adv. Col.* 1119F, in which he recalls that *lekta* stand between *phōnai*, expressions, and *tunchanonta*, things out there, or the external objects.¹⁵

One strategy for attacking the Stoics, as we have seen in a number of places, is to minimize apparent differences. The Aristotelian commentators thus at times attempt to bring the Stoics into the Aristotelian fold by showing them to be deviating from Aristotle in terminology alone, but not in doctrine. In so doing they betray a need to explain why the Stoics posit these different terms. The explanations serve, again, to downplay the philosophical innovation and cast the Stoics as themselves interpreters of Aristotle, seeking new words to express their way of understanding the Aristotelian concept-terms. Philoponus remarks, in this spirit, that in 'in their quest to be more innovative' the Stoics assign different names to the Peripatetics' established terms (*Philop. in An. Pr.* 243.1–4). This exercise is particularly striking when the commentators

¹⁵ See 6.4.1 above. Plutarch then assimilates the Stoic *tunchanonta* to Epicurean external things to which words directly refer.

come to explain the Stoic usage of ‘*tunchanon*’. Thus, though there is, from Themistius to Philoponus and others, a consistent transmission of the comparative grid of terms, there are at least two different attempts at explaining the use of ‘*tunchanon*’. The term is thus evidently the more puzzling of the Stoic peculiar word choices. The term ‘*lekton*’, in contrast, does not appear worthy of further explanation, but is straightforwardly taken to be the Stoic version of the Aristotelian *phōnai* (expressions).¹⁶ Thus Themistius, followed by Philoponus, claims that the Stoics call the external things (i.e. what Aristotle calls ‘*pragmata*’) ‘*tunchanonta*’: ‘because we want to obtain things’.¹⁷ But in a passage from Ps-Ammonius, which rehearses the exact same terminological correspondences as in Themistius, a slightly different explanation is offered: ‘they call things “*tunchanonta*” because the goal of life is to obtain them’.¹⁸

The explanations themselves are neither illuminating nor helpful as such. But they underline (especially because of their divergence) the awareness of the oddity of the term—and, ultimately, the perception that, despite efforts to the contrary, there is more to the Stoics’ use of *tunchanon* than a straightforward correspondence to the external thing, such as it is conceived of on the Aristotelian schema of the production of meaningful speech. On this basis it is safe to infer that, just as *lekta* are not utterances, a *tunchanon* is not quite the same thing as the external object, though it stands in a special relation to the external object. As the commentators show by anchoring their explanations to the use of the verb ‘*tunchanein*’, the key to this puzzling term must lie in how to understand the use of the verb ‘having something’ or ‘bearing something’. The first literal translation suggested here, as ‘that which has it’, is a first step in taking stock of the peculiarity. For there is a deliberate artificiality in the Stoic use, which indicates not so much an immediate coincidence with the external object as a distance between the thing a thing is, and its being considered as a *tunchanon* in relation to a signifier–signified relation.

8.1.3.2. *The Tunchanon and the External Object*

S.E. reports that the *tunchanon* is a corporeal thing; it and the signifier are thus both corporeal. If he is right, then everything we say, according to the Stoics, only ever has a corporeal referent. This would surely make for a crippling account of meaningful speech (this is the conclusion one reaches on the dependence theories discussed in 7.6.2 above, and hence one of the dissatisfactions with them).

¹⁶ Presumably because of the morphological association of *lekton* with *legein*, ‘to speak’.

¹⁷ Themistius in *An. Pr.* 92.2: ‘διότι τῶν πραγμάτων τυχεῖν βουλόμεθα’.

¹⁸ Ps-Ammonius in *An. Pr.* 68.5: ‘οὗτοι τοίνυν τὰ πράγματα τυγχάνοντα καλοῦσι· τέλος γὰρ τὸ τυχεῖν τούτων’.

To talk about a *tunchanon* rather than the body a thing is shows, however, that, at the very least, there is a relation between the corporeal object and the *lekton*, which is mediated by the notion of a *tunchanon*—even if it turns out that the *tunchanon* and the external object coincide. A *tunchanon* is characterized through its relation to the *lekton*. In virtue of that relation (whatever it turns out to be), the *tunchanon* cannot be identical with the thing in the world as it is, for the thing, or external object is what it is without ‘bearing’ or ‘having’ anything. A thing is not, in other words, characterized by its relation to a *lekton* and a signifier (but if it is a body, it is characterized in terms of its activity (or passivity), and if it is an incorporeal, it is characterized as subsisting or obtaining). But a *tunchanon* is yoked to the *lekton* and to the signifier.

Talk of the external object is confusing. It is a confusion first and foremost due to S.E. himself. For S.E., like the Aristotelian commentators, attempts to explain and identify the Stoics’ use of *tunchanon* with more familiar terms. He does so by describing the *tunchanon* as ‘the external object’, ‘*to ekstos hupokeimenon*’. This formula, as it stands in Greek, is in fact very rarely used and belongs to no specific school of thought. What is more, it is not particularly clear what the phrase actually picks out, if anything at all. For the formula merges at least two different ways of thinking about things in the world, a generic notion of a substratum (*hupokeimenon*) with an Aristotelian background (and which is not a Stoic term in any case), and a physicalist indefinite reference to the outside world with ‘*ektos*’. The formula is prominently used by S.E., presumably for the very reason that it is ambiguous. For it casts doubt on the possibility of there being actually something there which is an external substratum. Thus S.E. observes how honey feels sweet to the taste ‘by our being affected’ (*‘ek pathous*’), but that one can only ‘surmise’ (*‘stochazomai*’) that this sweet taste comes from ‘an external object’ (*‘to ekstos hupokeimenon*’); that is, that there is no way of ascertaining that there really is an external object which is sweet. Thus, though we should be able to relate our sensations to how things are really, that is, external to us, there is absolutely no way to gather evidence that there is such an external object in the first place.¹⁹

¹⁹ The honey example is from S.E. *M.* 7.365–6. A similar contrast with similar conclusion: S.E. *PH* 1.124; *PH* 2.74. See further FREDE 1998 pp.9–10. Tellingly, when Plutarch (in *Adv. Col* 1121B) attacks the Epicureans for holding to a theory of perception (through simulacra) which effectively makes it impossible to have any direct contact with the thing we perceive, since all we perceive are the thin simulacra films (*eidōla*) emitted by things, he distinguishes between the affection produced on us (*to pathos*) and the *ektos hupokeimenon*, concluding we can then only pronounce a belief on the affection (*pathos*), but say nothing, or say something false, if we state something about the external object. He then, in *Adv. Col.* 1121C, proceeds to rehearse a similar argument to the sceptical argument produced by S.E, designating as ‘external object’ the thing we cannot be sure exists at all, since all we have are affections. This seems all the more to corroborate the suggestion that ‘*ektos hupokeimenon*’ is a formula used in sceptical arguments in which the ‘external object’ is the straw man for whose reality there are no solid grounds.

In this light, S.E.'s explanation is not more insightful than those put forward by the Aristotelian commentators, since it has no Stoic credentials to it, but is fitted to S.E.'s own conceptual frame of reference. S.E. is adapting a Stoic schema to something more familiar, presuming, like the Peripatetics, that the third tier in an account of language and truth must perforce refer to the external thing. This is all the more clear given that, immediately after our passage about the Stoics, S.E. adds a comparison with Epicurus in which he re-adapts the Stoic *tunchanon* to fit the Epicurean 'things' ('*pragmata*') which signifiers are meant to directly refer to. The justification for this amalgamation is that Stoics and Epicureans both consider that language picks out external objects.²⁰ S.E. thus shapes an interpretative frame made to fit both accounts. For this reason, S.E.'s report is to be taken with great circumspection.

What we learn from S.E. is that a *lekton* and a *tunchanon* are yoked when it comes to the production of meaningful speech. The distinction which divides the Stoic account of dialectic into the account of signifying expressions and the account of what is signified (2.2.1 above) is thus extended in speech by the introduction of the *tunchanon*. The *tunchanon* is therefore not the thing itself, but that thing insofar as an expression has successfully got a *lekton* said with reference to it—but this is not the same thing as referring to an external thing.

With this characterization in mind, two testimonies—though presenting difficulties because they are garbled with respect to any clearly authentic line of Stoic doctrine—add a piece to the puzzle. One passage is from Clement (*Strom.* 8.9.26.5), directly following the passage about Stoic causation previously examined (in 7.3 above). Clement presents a sophism:

what you say comes out of your mouth; you say a house; therefore, a house comes out of your mouth²¹

The first clause is true, says Clement, but the conclusion is false.

for we do not say the house since that is a body, but we say the case, which is an incorporeal, and that which the house bears²²

An actual house does not in fact come out of our mouths when we speak. It is something else. Clement's proposed solution, that we utter an incorporeal case, is somewhat confused; we shall discuss it more precisely in 8.2.2.2 below in view of the Stoic resonances which are nevertheless discernible in Clement's misleadingly abridged transmission. But for now we shall focus primarily on the series of distinctions which support his solution and which corroborate the

²⁰ On S.E.'s imposing the language of the Stoics onto the Epicureans, see 6.4.1 above.

²¹ Clem. *Strom.* 8.9.26.5: 'ὁ λέγεις, διέρχεται σου διὰ τοῦ στόματος, [...] οἰκίαν δὲ λέγεις, οἰκία ἄρα διὰ τοῦ στόματος σου διέρχεται'. A similar puzzle, involving a wagon instead of a house, is associated with Chrysippus at D.L. 7.187.

²² Clement *Strom.* 8.9.26.5 (cont.): 'οὐδὲ γὰρ τὴν οἰκίαν λέγομεν σῶμα οὖσαν, ἀλλὰ τὴν πτωσιν ἀσώματον οὖσαν, ἣς οἰκία τυγχάνει'.

Stoic background to Clement's text, and especially the Stoic treatment of the *tunchanon*. Clement distinguishes four things: (i) the word 'house' must be distinguished from (ii) the actual house, which is a body, and (iii) the case which is an incorporeal, and (iv) the house as bearing the case, '*ptōseōs oikia tunchanei*'.

With (iv), Clement attests to a special, reserved use of '*tunchanein*' ('to bear' or 'to have') to indicate the kind of relation that a thing (external, or existentially independent, such as a house from (ii)) has with what is signified (iii) by an utterance (i). It is not that the house is duplicated into the actual house and the house that has or bears the *ptōsis*. But it is not the actual house which enters into a relation with the *ptōsis*, but something distinct from, though related to, the house which bears a *ptōsis*. The *ptōsis*, or case, Clement is talking about in (iii) is not the inflection of a noun, which is how Aristotle in *De Int.* 2 introduces the term '*ptōsis*', speaking of the *ptōseis*, i.e. the cases of the name, and referring to its declension.²³ But Clement, with the qualifier 'incorporeal', identified the *ptōsis* he is talking about as an ontological item. These are the grounds for the Stoic background to Clement's report here. For the Stoics, as we shall see in depth in the last section of this book (9.2 below), develop a very different notion of a *ptōsis* from the Aristotelian tradition, which is closer to questions about incorporeality than it is to declensions.

The big confusion in antiquity already centres around the common use of the term '*ptōsis*'. In the following we shall be talking of a 'case-*ptōsis*', a hybrid coinage, to discuss the Stoic notion and better contrast it to talk of the *ptōsis* as a grammatical case. Because Clement is so quick and allusive in these lines, and also because in the line preceding the house sophism Clement directly appeals to Aristotle as holding the view that causes are causes of appellatives (cf. 7.3 above)—a term which belongs to the same general context as the talk of *ptōseis* (declensions of nouns)—Clement's report generates some confusion. In order to be as clear as possible, we shall break up the discussion over different sections. Here we focus on the distinction in (iv) between a thing itself (e.g. a house) and the house as bearing a case-*ptōsis*. In 8.2.2.2 below we shall focus more particularly on Clement's talk of the case-*ptōsis*.

The connection between *tunchanein* and the difficult Stoic notion of the case-*ptōsis* is echoed in a second passage from Stobaeus. At the close of a discussion on concepts in the mind, to which the Stoics are shown to have reduced Platonic Forms, Stobaeus mentions the distinction between 'the concepts in which we participate' and 'cases-*ptōseis* which we bear'.²⁴ Here

²³ Arist. *De Int.* 2, 16a32–16b1, and see more at 9.2.7 below.

²⁴ Stob. *Ecl.* 1.12.3.9–11: 'τῶν μὲν ἐννοημάτων μετέχειν ἡμᾶς, τῶν δὲ πτώσεων, ἃς δὴ προσηγορίας καλοῦσι, τυγχάνειν', 'We participate in the concepts, we bear the case-*ptōseis*, which they in fact call "appellatives"'. For more on this passage see 9.2.3 below. For our present focus, it is the use of '*tunchanein*' paired with '*ptōsis*', within a distinctly Stoic context of discussion, which is of central importance.

too, what Stobaeus preserves from Stoic doctrine (verified against the previous texts) is the distinction between being an individual thing (here it us, as paradigms of individuals) and the individual as bearing or having a case-*ptōsis*. What is captured is, once more, the distance between the thing and that thing insofar as it enters into a relation with an incorporeal thing said (a *lekton*) by bearing a case.

What these texts attest to is that, when it comes to giving an account of speech, the Stoics step away from talk of what a statement is about. The Stoic analysis holds that what gets said is said in relation to what bears the case-*ptōsis*. We do not, that is, say something about Cato (say). Seneca himself confirms this (*Ep.* 117.13) when he says that ‘there is a great difference between talking about something (*de illo*) and saying something (*illud*)’. The Stoics develop the account of what it is to say something. This leads them to posit a case-bearer whose original *raison d’être* is its dependency on the *lekton* (in terms yet to be articulated). It is a dependency which writes off the immediate identification of the case-bearer with the external object, for whom is reserved a separate treatment as to what a statement is about.

8.1.3.3. *The Tunchanon is Dependent on the Lekton*

The *lekton* which gets said is related to that which bears a case-*ptōsis*. The *tunchanon* in S.E.’s semantic triad is thus not identical with an external object, whose status specifications (i.e. in what way it is the thing it is) are not determined by its bearing a case-*ptōsis*. The external thing may coincide with the case-bearer (as we shall see, it coincides with it when the *lekton* is true). But identifying the *tunchanon* is identifying the bearer of the case, which is not the thing itself. For the *tunchanon*, by contrast, owes any and all of its specifications to its relation to the *lekton*.

By distinguishing a case-bearer from an external thing, the Stoics free what gets said from depending on there being something there about which we say it, or to which we must refer, or which we name, when we say something. Two factors are involved which support the introduction of a case-bearer in between what gets said and the external thing. Firstly, the distinction between naming and saying: when we say something (on the relevant understanding of ‘saying’), we, precisely, do not name it; nor do we name something about which we say something else. Secondly, the deep metaphysical commitments about the structure of *lekta* (namely the internal dynamics which ground the unity of the *lekton*, though it is formed of parts) lead to positing the *tunchanon* as the item which represents the relation of the *katēgorēma* to the case-*ptōsis*.

As far as the first point is concerned, we have discussed at length the logical and ontological purport of distinguishing between naming and saying for the Stoics (5.1 above); we shall develop this distinction further in the following discussion about names and cases-*ptōseis* (9.2 below). The *tunchanon* is not a

thing which is directly referred to or signified. For the words which refer or signify, signify qualities, not *tunchanonta*. Thus: 'a name is a part of speech that reveals an individuating quality'.²⁵ The *tunchanon*, yoked to a *lekton* and not to a name, corresponds to Dion, the man, insofar as Dion is bearing a case-*ptōsis* within the *axiōma* (say) [Dion walks]. When this *axiōma* is true, then there is a coincidence between the thing itself (Dion) and the *tunchanon*. But the priority for the *tunchanon* is the relation it has with the *lekton*. This places the *tunchanon* in an indirect position: for it stands in a relation to the case-*ptōsis*, which itself is entirely dependent on the relation it, the case-*ptōsis*, stands in within the internal structure of the *lekton*. For if the *tunchanon* is the case-bearer, the case-*ptōsis* itself is a case-*ptōsis* only in relation to the *katēgorēma*, of which it is the thing the *katēgorēma* is said.

The matter is complex, to say the least: it requires an account of the case-*ptōsis* since the *tunchanon* is inseparably bound to this item, being as it is the case-bearer. But the case-*ptōsis* is not an independent item, it is itself utterly determined by the *katēgorēma*. Thus, with the expression 'Dion is walking', a *katēgorēma* [is walking] is said of a case-*ptōsis* [Dion], for which there is a case-bearer, the *tunchanon* Dion. Whether there actually exists a thing, here, a person, Dion, is a further question, which will be satisfied if indeed there is something in the world which meets the requirements set out by the case-bearer—these requirements being that there is someone in the world who is Dion *and* that this person is walking.

Must there be something which satisfies these requirements? No. In other words, there is no need for there to exist a direct referent, for a *lekton* to be said and for someone, in saying it, to get something meaningful said. The *tunchanon* does not imply existence of a thing. Nor, moreover, does it imply that the thing be a corporeal entity. In uttering the sentence 'time flies', a *katēgorēma* [flies] is said of a case-*ptōsis* [time]. The *lekton* thus constituted has an accompanying *tunchanon*, the case-bearer, which is time insofar as it bears the case-*ptōsis* embedded in the *lekton*, i.e. time insofar as it is flying. Whether the *lekton* is actually true or false will depend on whether there is indeed a thing in the world which meets the requirements the *tunchanon* poses: namely bearing the case of which a *katēgorēma* is said.

These are the metaphysical commitments about the structure of *lekta*, marked out above as the second reason for the Stoics' distinguishing, or distancing, the case-bearer from the thing itself. A *lekton* is a self-complete item in ontology which subsists as the unit it constitutes. As we have seen, this unit is the result of a basic structure in which something is said of something (xRy) such that no part of this relation is alienable from another. It is to these questions that we shall turn to next, because at first blush the unity appears

²⁵ D.L. 7.58. See 9.2.1.4 below.

jeopardized by the talk not only of *katēgorēmata* on the one hand, and cases-*ptōseis* on the other, but also of *tunchanon* as case-bearers. For the *tunchanon* seems to have a privileged relation with the case-*ptōsis*, given that it is the case-bearer. But the unified internal structure of the *lekton* prevents one internal part from having a separate association with something outside the *lekton*. It is therefore first and foremost the special relation between the case-*ptōsis* and the *katēgorēma* which calibrates the place and role of the *tunchanon*.

This is illustrated in a discussion reported by Alexander on the Stoic view of negation. For the Aristotelians, Alexander says (*in An. Pr.* 402.1–19), the negation of ‘Dion is walking’, namely ‘Dion is not walking’, is a matter of denying that the predicate ‘is walking’ holds of Dion. But the Stoics give a more ramified analysis of the expression ‘Dion is not walking’. The expression, according to them, is ambiguous. It can be construed as saying that walking is not said of Dion, or it can be taken to say that it is not the case that Dion is walking. The difference is brought out all the better for cases in which there is no such person in reality as Dion. On the first parsing, both saying that Dion is walking or that Dion is not walking turn out false, because there is no Dion there to either be walking or not walking. One or the other proposition is ‘no less affirmative’ (*ouden hēttōn kataphatikon*). Alexander’s language is Aristotelian (hence our talk here of propositions and predicates, whereby expression and what is expressed are not distinguished). But he makes a concession to the Stoics by breaking down what is meant by affirmative (and therefore false when Dion does not exist), namely that, for each of ‘Dion is walking’ and ‘Dion is not walking’ where either [is walking] or [is not walking] are said of [Dion], it is affirmed (though this is false) that there is something in the world, and it is Dion, and it either walks or not.²⁶ The affirmation therefore is always endorsed because of the assumption, on either case, that there is something which is Dion. Alexander does not speak of a *tunchanon* here, but we may identify the place of the *tunchanon* on the Stoic analysis: it corresponds to the assumption that there is something, and that that something is walking. Were it the case that Dion existed, then Dion would meet the requirements of the case-bearer associated with the case-*ptōsis* [Dion] in [Dion is walking], or in [Dion is not walking]. That is to say that Dion, the man, would meet the requirement of being the thing which is Dion, *and* being that which is either walking or not walking.

Alexander adds that this does not make the affirmation and negation opposites, for ‘the contradictories are false at the same time’.²⁷ Now, S.E. in

²⁶ For this typically Stoic analysis see S.E. *M.* 11.8 where a generic concept such as ‘man’ in the statement that man is a rational mortal animal, is broken down into: if there is a something (*ti*), which is a man, it is a mortal rational animal. See more at 9.2.5 below.

²⁷ Alex. *in An. Pr.* 402.14: ‘τὰ ἀντικείμενα ἀντιφατικῶς ἅμα γίνεσθαι ψευδῆ’.

the lines preceding our passage on the semantic triad, at *M.* 8.10, recalls the Stoic characterization of an *axiōma* as true in that it:

is that which obtains and is the opposite of something; a false *axiōma*, is one which does not obtain and is the opposite of something²⁸

The opposite of [a φ -ies] is not[a is φ -ies]. This is precisely what Alexander points to when he describes the alternative way of construing the negation 'Dion is not walking' for the Stoics. This second construal, Alexander suggests, is the proper articulation, for the Stoics, of a negation. That is to say that a negation covers the whole affirmative *axiōma*. The truth and falsity of an *axiōma* resides in the double satisfaction of the thing in the world meeting both the requirement of being a thing which is Dion, and being the thing which is walking. It is, therefore, the whole *axiōma* which must be negated in order to set out the two opposites, the one in which both those requirements are met, the other in which neither is met. The *axiōma* is true if there is a thing in the world meeting the double requirements of the *tunchanon*, i.e. of being a thing which is Dion and walking.²⁹ The obtaining of an *axiōma* thus frames the truth of what gets said. In obtaining, the *tunchanon* associated with the *axiōma* coincides with an external thing. In parallel, the obtaining of an *axiōma* determines the subsistence of its opposite (its negation). The *tunchanon* in the latter case does not coincide with the external thing, and yet this does not eliminate the *tunchanon* which depends on the *axiōma*.

This suggests that the role of the *tunchanon* is to guarantee meaning without reference, but not the meaning of words. A *tunchanon* comes about when a successfully strung set of words has got one *lekton* said. The unit which the *lekton* constitutes is thus crucial when it comes to considering the yoking of signifier, *lekton*, and *tunchanon*. For there is a *tunchanon* only with respect to a complete *lekton*, structured on the basis of a propositional articulation.

8.1.3.4. S.E. *M.* 8.12: a Grey Area

Before we delve into the questions which arise concerning the internal structure of a *lekton*, and which involve the discussion of complete and incomplete *lekta*, a concern is left hanging with regard to S.E.'s semantic triad. In the preceding pages we have been talking about the *lekton* corresponding to Dion is walking. But S.E., in talking of a *lekton* yoked to a signifier and a *tunchanon*, only ever speaks of 'Dion' as his example, and not of 'Dion is walking'. If what

²⁸ See 8.1.2. with n.9 above for the Greek text.

²⁹ See thus GOURINAT 2000 p.122 on the 'double truth-condition for true propositions'.

I claim is correct, however, the *lekton* cannot be exemplified by what is expressed by the name 'Dion'. It is precisely the difference between naming and saying that invalidates the name 'Dion' from expressing a *lekton*, since it names something (a quality, cf. n.25 above) but gets nothing said. In fact, in the text, S.E. does not actually give an example of a *lekton*, only an example of a signifier and an example for a case-bearer, which, as we have seen, is a rather delicate matter, especially if one avoids giving an example of the *lekton*. A properly enunciated example of a *tunchanon* would thus have to be: Dion insofar as it bears the case-*ptōsis* [Dion] of which [is walking] is said.

All S.E. reports is that the *lekton* is what is 'revealed' by the signifier 'Dion'. A few pages down, at *M.* 8.75, the same set-up is given, in which we find distinguished a *lekton*, its expression 'Dion', and the *tunchanon*, Dion himself. These twin passages are the only texts which present the view that the expression 'Dion' should express, on its own, a *lekton*. Various solutions to this anomaly have been suggested. One solution is to claim that this text shows that the case-*ptōsis* (that of which a *katēgorēma* is said) is an incomplete *lekton*, just as *katēgorēmata* are said to be incomplete *lekta*.³⁰ Another has been that of assuming that the expression 'Dion' in fact corresponds to a proposition of the form [this is Dion].³¹

On the first interpretation, the relation between the three interconnected items is assimilated to a Fregean account of sense and reference whereby the expression 'Dion' picks out [Dion], a case-*ptōsis* which is an incomplete *lekton*, distinguished from the body it refers to and standing for the Fregean sense of the expression, and thus what the expression signifies.³² On such a reading, the specificity of the Stoic distinctions disappears—not least of which the Stoic view that a correct arrangement of words serves to express one *lekton*, and not distinct parts of a *lekton*. The view also entails a simplification of the relation of the *tunchanon* to the expression, taking expressions to be referring to things in the world and *tunchanonta* to correspond to those things in the world. True enough, S.E.'s own presentation of the *tunchanon* lends itself to suppose that a *tunchanon* is, in effect, the Stoic way of talking about things in the world—hence S.E.'s smooth transition, at *M.* 8.13, to Epicurus, whom he pairs with Strato, 'the physicist'.³³ The two are presented as holding a theory of meaningful speech which admits only of 'a signifier and a *tunchanon*', in which the

³⁰ See GASKIN 1997. ³¹ See LONG 1971b p.77; DETEL et al. 1980 p.284.

³² Thus GASKIN 1997 p.95, but see also BARNOUW 2002 p.290f.: 'the *tunchanon* is simply what is referred to by the signifier'.

³³ Strato is the successor of Theophrastus at the head of the Lyceum; though he is remembered primarily as 'an innovator' in the natural sciences (cf. Cic. *Fin.* 5.13), D.L. at 5.59–60 records a number of works in logic. We may presume that he keeps to the Aristotelian line in which there is nothing 'in between thoughts and things' as we have seen rehearsed throughout the later Peripatetic tradition (6.3 above). That he would have called things in the world '*tunchanonta*' is as unlikely as it is that Epicurus would have done so (cf. 6.4.1 above).

signifier directly refers to the so-called ‘*tunchanon*’. It should be clear by now that for the Stoics there are no *tunchanonta* without *lekta*; or, at the very least, that ‘*tunchanon*’ has a special usage for the Stoics. S.E.’s sleek levelling out of the Stoic usage to be applied to Epicurus and Strato shows that he does not respect that special usage. This therefore casts some grey clouds on an unquestioning acceptance of his report, and hence also on its conversion into a distinction between sense and reference, where the level of sense is assimilable to the level of the *lekton*, and reference to that of the *tunchanon*.

As for the second interpretation, this is an attempt to align S.E.’s testimony with other texts, such as the passage from *Ep.* 117.13 in which Seneca gives as an example of a *lekton* [Cato is walking]—a *lekton* which is either true or false. This is all the more tempting since it is, in fact, a *lekton* which is either true or false, which S.E. seems to have in mind. For the passage presenting the semantic triad is first introduced by a discussion of the Stoic *axiōma* as that which is true or false (quoted in 8.1.2 n.9 above from S.E. *M.* 8.10). It is this definition of the *axiōma*, as that which is true or false, which then leads S.E. to present the Stoic semantic triad, precisely to identify the status of this thing which is true or false, which the Stoics distinguish from the signifier and the external thing. What is more, the presentation of the semantic triad ends with the reconfirmation that *axiōmata* are the things which are either true or false. In the light of the order of presentation of the text, it seems incongruous that S.E. should exemplify the point about truth and falsity with the expression ‘Dion’, considering it as expressing an incomplete *lekton*. For S.E. explicitly mentions incomplete *lekta* as inadequate to count as true or false. That S.E.’s report needs to be tweaked in some way therefore appears evident enough. That the text itself should be corrected or readjusted, however, does not seem appropriate, especially given that S.E. persists with this frame of presentation further down at *M.* 8.75. Therefore, the best that can be said for S.E.’s testimony is that it betrays marks of confusion about the Stoic theory and wariness in refraining from giving an example of a *lekton*.

Is S.E. not quite sure what a *lekton* should look like? In an earnest attempt to give as authentic and close a testimony as possible, S.E. appears to shrink from having to write out an example of a *lekton*, perhaps because, in keeping to the net distinction between expression and *lekton*, he realizes that he cannot give an example without actually repeating the expression and the word order involved in correct expression.³⁴ After all, his most acerbic critique against the Stoic notion of a *lekton* is that, for all the supposed distinctions, if surface

³⁴ BRUNSCHWIG 1995a pp.125–6 underlines a series of incongruities with the use of ‘Dion’ as a badly chosen example, which therefore might have been ‘pasted in’ from a different context and need not be taken very seriously here. Brunschwig thus pushes for an explanation from heedlessness, whereas I suggest that here S.E. is perhaps earnestly at a loss.

grammar reflects the structure of *lekta*, then all there is to *lekta* is the expression. The *lekton* is then uttered word after uttered word, such that every word represents a part of a *lekton*, and there is nothing more to a *lekton* than the juxtaposition of words (5.1.3 and 5.2 above). S.E.'s report must therefore be put in perspective: it is precious in that it sets out the terms of the semantic triad which, for the Stoics, frames the role and place of *lekta* in the production of meaningful speech. But the text is not a clean report of Stoic doctrine, for S.E. inserts his own explanations of the terms and his own examples, which are misleading.

S.E.'s difficulties are also due to the difficulties of the Stoic account. In the main, the tension arises in the application of an ontological framework onto a theory of language. We have been calling the 'three things yoked together' a semantic triad over the last few pages in the wake of S.E.'s own introduction of the discussion of semantics, in particular his focus on where truth and falsity reside within meaningful speech:

for some place truth and falsity in what is signified, others in expression, and others in the movements of the mind³⁵

When it comes to discussing the Stoics, who are those who place truth and falsity in what is signified, it is an account of meaningful speech that S.E. gives, with a reference to foreigners who do not understand what they hear. The three things yoked together constitute thus a semantic triad. But each of these three things are distinguished one from the other in terms of their ontological status. They are identified not through their role in language, but as ontological items. The terms S.E. transmits attest to this: the *lekton* is the thing which subsists (*paruphistamenon*), our minds 'grasp' (*antilambanesthai*), i.e. relate to an intelligible and not something perceptible, the signifier is a corporeal (*sōma*), as is also the *tunchanon*, whose contrast with the *lekton* is made, emphatically, through the contrast of their corporeality with the *lekton*'s incorporeality; even S.E.'s appeal to the term '*hupokeimenon*' to explain what a *tunchanon* is supposed to be is an appeal to an ontological marker of existence. These are all terms which belong to descriptions and characterizations of ontological items. Thus what we witness S.E. grappling with, is how to fit these terms into a different framework which belongs to language and communication, governed by notions such as 'understanding what is said' (*'epaiouai'*), 'hearing sounds' (*'phōnēs akouontes'*), 'signifiers', 'being revealed', and speakers represented here as 'us' and 'them' (i.e. the foreigners).

³⁵ S.E. M. 8.11: 'οἱ μὲν περὶ τῷ σημαινόμενῳ τὸ ἀληθές τε καὶ ψεῦδος ὑπεστήσαντο, οἱ δὲ περὶ τῇ φωνῇ, οἱ δὲ περὶ τῇ κινήσει τῆς διανοίας. καὶ δὴ τῆς μὲν πρώτης δόξης προεστήκασιν οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στωᾶς', 'some place truth and falsity in what is signified, others in expression, and others in the movements of the mind; and indeed, those who promoted the first option were the Stoics'.

8.1.3.5. *Language, States-of-affairs, and the Place of Man*

S.E.'s report enables us to address a legitimate question about the effective application of a robust ontological framework onto a theory of language. For the difficulties that the grey area in S.E.'s account betrays are borne out of a certain tension. For S.E.'s attempts at interpreting the place and role of the *lekton* in language suggest that there is some violence, or straitjacketing, involved in moulding language onto a pre-established ontological framework—but that this is what the Stoics intend (and not the other way around).

For the Stoics, fundamentally, the shift from ontological structure to linguistic expression is a natural shift. For *lekta*, which obtain or subsist as ontological items, are constituted by a structure which is what language, by its very nature, grasps and expresses. To be a rational being is to grasp, by means of a language, the rational structure of the cosmos of which *lekta* are the keystone, since they correspond to the states-of-affairs in which each and every thing is implicated. For each and every constituent of the cosmos has states-of-affairs obtain and subsist with respect to it. In fact, that is what it is to be a constituent of the cosmos. States-of-affairs are thus articulated in terms of *lekta*, which are the kinds of things which language gets said; therefore *lekta* are what there is to say. The structure of states-of-affairs is based on a nuclear relation of attribution in which one thing is said of another. Language, communication, and thought are thus the expressive modes of the cosmic structure in which what there is, is also, thereby, what there is to be said.

Since a *lekton* which obtains determines the subsistence of its opposite, there are *lekta* which are true, i.e. are constituted by a true attribution (of a *katēgorēma* truly attributed to something), and there are *lekta* which are false. Thus what there is to be said extends beyond the actual states-of-affairs governing the actual structure of the cosmos, for there are also false *lekta*, also there to be said. Thus language expresses what there is to be said, on the understanding that what there is to be said, are real unified items, otherwise designated as *lekta*. There is something true to be said in virtue of a *lekton* obtaining, and there is also something false to be said, which corresponds to a subsisting *lekton*. The move from a true thing to say, to just a thing to say follows, since language is a by-product of reason whose nature is to grasp these structures.

But testimonies such as S.E.'s on the semantic triad attest to the radicality of the Stoic position. It is ultimately the radicality which is at the heart of the misrepresentations we have already seen arising amongst the ancient commentators, from later Stoics, as from rival schools of thought, when it comes to discussing the Stoic notion of the *lekton*. The criticisms come down to not accepting that language be regarded as an articulator of ontological structure. Seneca is exemplary in this refusal: it is insignificant that we should say either that wisdom is a good or being wise is good, for language is a pliable tool which

is at the service of a speaker's style and level of expression (slang, formal, etc.), and not at the service of a cosmic logical structure. What is at stake, therefore, is a crucial question of the place of language and, it follows, of the place of man in the cosmos.

This is as it should be given the kind of thing a *lekton* is: not an avatar of a (seemingly overly) complex semantic theory, but a co-constituent of the ontological structure of the cosmos. The necessary development of reason in us means that we come, necessarily, to be aware of the structures in which the constituents of the world are ordered (cf. 4.1 above). This rationalization over the world passes through an access to language, which is nothing more than the expression of our grasp of ontological structure. We therefore do not wield language as a tool, for the Stoics. It is the characteristic of beings endowed with reason in the order of the cosmos, that we are not only part and parcel of the ontological configuration, but that, in contrast with irrational beings, we are also capable of grasping—partially (for only God can grasp all *lekta*)—the structure we are part of. This, however, does not mean that all that we get said is the case, or is true. But it does mean that language is characterized through its capacity to articulate relations, which map onto *lekta*. This is what it is to be rational, namely to have the capacity to ascribe something to something. We do this as children with our first steps towards rationality when, in first perceiving something, say a white page, we have a first rational impression of the page's being white or the page as a white thing, ascribing a grounding concept of white to a newly perceived object (as discussed in 2.2.3 above). We make mistakes in articulating the content of our impression (e.g. taking the round tower to be square from afar), but never do we *not* articulate the content of our impressions according to the rational structure of the xRy relation, as it has been described in these pages, whereby something is said of something. In this light, the Stoics consider language necessarily to mirror, or be at the service of, a structure which, due to other limitations of ours, we can never fully grasp. To follow the implications of this view further, two points are worth mentioning: the first concerns the question of translation, the second the question of our limitations and those of the cosmos.

8.1.3.5.1. Is Translation Possible?

Firstly, then, does the Stoic account of language as revelatory, but not productive, of *lekta* allow for the possibility of translation? The answer is not straightforward: for on the one hand, if a language is at the service of ontological structure, then every element of language reveals or corresponds to something in the ontological structure, which only a precise formulation governed by its proper laws for correct expression is able to capture. It should follow then, that no two languages will express quite the same *lekton*—since a language differs from another on the basis of its distinct set of laws for correct expression (cf. 5.1.3.3 above). On the other hand, every language should have

as its *raison d'être* that of expressing all there is to say, i.e. should be capable of expressing all *lekta*. Thus, though word order and sounds, and possibly gestures, are different from one language to another, all *lekta* should have their overlapping expressions in all languages. It follows that all languages (including spoken, gestural, and choreographic languages) should be transposable and translatable one into another. That is to say that translation should be possible on the understanding that translation is not a word-by-word conversion, but sentence-by-sentence-structure interconversion.

We know that the Stoics, or some Stoics, were particularly sensitive to these questions, starting with the possibility of synonymy in one and the same language. Thus Porphyry, *via* Ammonius, reports that the Stoics distinguish between the expressions 'it is a regret for Socrates' and 'Socrates regrets'. In Greek, the first locution consists of a fixed conjugated, what we call impersonal, verbal form, in the 3rd person singular, '*metamelei*' ('it is a regret'), which takes a dative for the person or persons (singular or plural) involved; the verbal part does not therefore agree with the subject who is regretting, but remains unchanged: e.g. 'for Socrates it is a regret' ('*Sōkratei metamelei*'), or 'for Socrates and Plato it is a regret' ('*Sōkratei kai Platōni metamelei*'). The second locution is a conjugated verb in the middle-voice, '*metameleitai*', constructed with a nominative whose number the verb agrees with, here 3rd person singular, e.g. 'Socrates regrets' ('*Sōkratēs metameleitai*') or if the subject is plural, 3rd person plural, e.g. 'they regret' ('*houtoi metamelontai*').³⁶ The Stoics consider the first locution as expressing what they call a '*parakatēgorēma*' by which (though explanations run thin³⁷) what is emphasized is an indirect relation of the *katēgorēma* to that of which it is said. In other words, the xRy relation is jostled, insofar as something is indirectly said of something, to the extent that the two expressions 'it is a regret to Socrates' and 'Socrates regrets' are not interchangeable. We see from this example how precisely the Stoics consider sentence-structures to pick out ontological structures. This, furthermore, casts great doubts as to whether the Stoics think translation is in fact possible, since some languages capture more structures, or other structures, than others, and therefore have at least some untranslatable expressions. The second question follows from this point of observation. If translation is not possible then languages are limited, some more than others, in their capacity to grasp and articulate *lekta*.

8.1.3.5.2. Is a Language Limited?

Would the sage, who is 'the only dialectician' (D.L. 7.83) need to know every language in the world to grasp all *lekta*? And would even that knowledge be

³⁶ In Ammonius *in de Int.* 44.25–32.

³⁷ Porphyry (Amm. *in de Int.* 44.26) paraphrases the term as 'that which falls beside what has happened' ('*παρακείμενον τῷ συμβάματι*'). See more at 9.2.9 below.

enough? For if there is a *lekton* that one language can express and another cannot, then there might always be another language capable of expressing still other *lekta*.³⁸ In other words, no language—nor the sum of all known languages—guarantees access to all *lekta*. For language is the expression of human rationality, first and foremost, therefore, bound by a development and an ending. What constitutes the development of a language? From our discussions so far, two main kinds of answers are pertinent: either (i) its refinement in syntactic formulae which follow the development of reason as grasping ever more subtle ontological structures (such as the distinction noted above in Greek between ‘there is a regret for me’ and ‘I regret’), or (ii) its gradual enrichment of vocabulary. The Stoic answer corresponds to the first kind of answer, (i). The second answer, (ii), corresponds to the Epicurean position on language, which is that it is enriched gradually by the additions brought to it by ‘the more perspicacious people’ (*hoi suneidotes*) who introduce new terms for the things they observe, which others miss out.³⁹ Whether on the Stoic or the Epicurean view, the development of language accompanies our human discoveries, i.e. the discoveries of new truths (for instance, when it was discovered, that $E = mc^2$, for which new mathematical and linguistic formulations were introduced), or the discoveries of new things which have never been expressed before (one of the tasks of art and literature).

Conversely, we may ask whether the total number of *lekta* is limited; and whether in that case the possibilities of a development of language are limited by the limited number of *lekta*. In the mind of God, i.e. the active principle and producer of each thing in the cosmos, it must be the case that all the *lekta* are already present. There is a limit to the number of *lekta*, just as there is a limit to the existence of the cosmos, until, that is, it is all consumed at the conflagration.⁴⁰ But human beings are limited first and foremost by their bodies. The body is our sole means, through the expression of language, to grasp *lekta*, since voice is corporeal, just as the hand gestures of the gymnastics teacher (4.4.1 above). For this reason it is tempting to take the Stoics to be relying on language to be the transparent key to the ontological structure of the cosmos, held together by *lekta*. But this would be too hasty. For, though language is our means of access to this structure, a fine-tuned access depends

³⁸ What the wise man knows, to quote KERFERD 1978, is thus not a linguistic knowledge. In this light BROUWER 2014 pp.33–6 repositions the sage, not as all-knowing, but as aware of his place in nature, which is also achieved through the proper realization of *oikeiosis* as argued in KLEIN 2016.

³⁹ Epicurus *Her.* 76. See VERLINSKY 2005 pp.80–1 (and see 2.2.5 with n.64 above).

⁴⁰ *Lekta* can perish (see Alex. in *An. Pr.* 177.30 and 9.2.6 below), just as the cosmos ‘which perishes at the conflagration’, see Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 888A, D.L. 7.134. But, as Alex. in *An. Pr.* 180.31–6 notes, this perishing pends a piecemeal return of each and every item, after the conflagration which includes the return to reality of the *lekton* that had once perished, the example being the *lekton* expressed by ‘This one is dead’.

on our own progress in the mastery of language, which, given that we are none of us sages, is never particularly developed.

If we bear this in mind, a number of aspects concerning the account of *lekta* fall in place: the notions of completeness and incompleteness, the kinds of *axiōmata* determined by the case-*ptōsis* they are constituted by (determinate, indeterminate, or neither—see 9.2.1 below), as also the differentiation between the different kinds of *lekta* (including questions, commands, wishes, and others). For there are enough indications that the Stoics distinguish these various questions in view of the capacities and limitations of language with regard to what there is there to be said. For a *lekton* is itself constituted by a nuclear structure, revolving around something's being said of something (the xRy relation we have been describing in these pages), of which no part can be disengaged from the other: in that the y (paradigmatically the case-*ptōsis*) is utterly dependent on the status of x (the *katēgorēma*). Hence this nuclear structure constitutes the basis for one *lekton*, one single thing, there to be said, through a fitting expression.

This expression, depending on the language, will have to enlist any number of elements (words, gestures, context-sensitive signals, etc.) to get that one *lekton* said. All the more so when the *lekton* in question is itself complex, for instance if it is a syllogism, which is also considered to be a single *lekton*, i.e. one thing said (D.L. 7.63 and 78). Thus, on the one hand, language is at the service of unravelling ontological structure. In that perspective, every word has a crucial role in bringing out a feature of the ontological structure of reality. On the other hand, surface complexity of expression is meant to reveal the unity of the *lekton*. But the more work and analysis is done on the first branch (which sequence of words expresses which *lekton*), the more discrete parts are discovered within the second branch (the constituents of the unity of the *lekton*) which threaten to dismantle the unity of the *lekton*. It does not seem then that the account of the structure of the *lekton* is distinguishable from the linguistic analysis. This is the recurrent threat which now also reverses the concern about the limits of language: if all there is to *lekta* is the languages at our disposal, then it is language which marks the limit of *lekta*, and not the cosmic dimensions governed by God, the active principle.

The Stoic account of *lekta* contributes to the development of an account of logic and language, but it also lays the foundations for a theory of grammar, i.e. the philosophical explanations of grammatical features of language. As the first Greek Grammarians absorb lessons from the Stoics, and strands in ancient philosophy of language adopt distinctions set out by the Stoics, the original Stoic concern to account for language as the human expression of how we grasp the structural keystones of ontology (which is the role played by the *lekta* in the cosmic *systema*) is lost. Most of the source texts which attest to this Stoic concern are in fact texts from non-Stoic authors. From the echoes and snippets of Stoic doctrine which slip through the net of critics, doxographers,

and grammarians, it is possible to understand how the Stoic account aspires for consistency and is, in the Stoic usage, ‘*systematic*’: reality is an articulated structure constituted by states-of-affairs, calibrated by relations between bodies and *lekta*. These in turn determine and are reflected by language, which we humans cannot but come to use (whichever mode of expression we come to develop).

8.2. THE UNITY OF THE *LEKTON*

8.2.1. Incomplete and Self-complete

Whether because there indeed is a developmental history of the account of *lekta*, beginning, with Zeno, in causation (through the analysis of which Zeno establishes the reality of *katēgorēmata*), or because the origin of the theory is grounded in the debates between pre-Stoic logicians of the Dialectical school, with Clinomachus’ pioneering work, or works, ‘on *axiōmata*, *katēgorēmata*, and things like that,’⁴¹ it is evident that the Stoic account of *lekta* is constructed around the centrality of the *katēgorēma*. The *katēgorēma* is central, but is it detachable? Is there, in other words, such a thing as just a *katēgorēma* on its own?

Our analyses so far have shown that the *katēgorēma* is central but is never on its own. Within the frame of the causal relation a *katēgorēma* obtains with respect to a passive body, and is thereby said of or attributed to something, the afore-named case-*ptōsis*. Together with that of which it is said, the *katēgorēma* can constitute an *axiōma*. The *axiōma* obtains insofar as the *katēgorēma* obtains, in such a way that the *katēgorēma*’s obtaining is not distinct from the *axiōma*’s obtaining. They are, from the point of view of ontology, or physics, not distinguishable as distinct items.

But they have different modalities in terms of logical relations: the *axiōma* obtains and thereby is true (its status supported and validated by the causal configuration). The *katēgorēma*, by contrast, is said of something, on the deep understanding of ‘being said of’, that to be said of is to be truly said of. Thus (keeping, for the time being, to the confines of the causal relation) its attribution to something can only be envisaged in terms of true attribution. A *katēgorēma* is not, therefore, an item which is true or false. It is true of something, which is a different feature altogether from the *axiōma*’s being

⁴¹ D.L. 2.112: see 7.1.1 with n.9 above. This heritage is the dead weight, as Seneca (*Ep.* 117.12) would have it, that the Stoics drag along ‘from the Old Dialecticians’, also referred to by Cic. *Tusc.* 4.9.21 specifically with reference to *katēgorēmata*; see on this possible heritage BRUNSCHWIG 1995c p.254.

true. A *katēgorēma* which is true of something has a corresponding *axiōma*, which it constitutes, which is true or false. When the *axiōma* is true, it is true in virtue of its corresponding *katēgorēma* being truly said of something.

This distinction in logic determines, in turn, different modalities when it comes to language and what gets expressed when we speak. For the relation of ‘said of’, as the core of the *lekton*, marks out *lekta* as that which gets said when we speak. Thus we do not say ‘is clean’, but we say something which obtains in relation to what clean is said of, e.g. that the house is clean. When we get an *axiōma* said, or express an *axiōma*, we thereby get something complete said. But it seems we are also able to express what ontologically seems inseparable, namely that which corresponds to the *katēgorēma* on its own, i.e. just the thing which is said of something (e.g. ‘being melted’). We can, it seems, get a *katēgorēma* said, it is only that when we do, what we have said is something incomplete.

The differences are marked out when comparing the Stoic descriptions for an *axiōma* and those for the *katēgorēma*:

An *axiōma* is that which is true or false; or a self-complete thing which can be stated as far as itself is concerned.⁴²

A *katēgorēma* is that which is said of something, or a thing combined to some thing or things, as the followers of Apollodorus say, or an incomplete *lekton* combined to a direct case-*ptōsis* so as to form an *axiōma*.⁴³

There are some key terms in both these passages that will occupy us for the rest of this chapter and the next. As often with the Stoics, a number of descriptions are provided which are complementary, setting out different aspects of the *axiōma* and the *katēgorēma* and their different applications and modalities within the Stoic *systema*.⁴⁴ There is one thing the *axiōma* and the *katēgorēma* have in common: they are both a *pragma*, and from parallel texts, and the context of these passages in D.L., we can safely assume that this is interchangeable with being a *lekton*. But reading these texts side by side sets out the points of contrast we have begun to notice in more clear-cut detail. There are thus four poles of contrast by which the *katēgorēma* is shown to fall

⁴² D.L. 7.65: ‘Ἀξιώματα δέ εἰσιν ὅ ἐστιν ἀληθές ἢ ψεῦδος· ἢ πᾶν αὐτοτελές ἀποφαντὸν ὅσον ἐφ’ ἐαυτῷ.’ The second clause is the most famous and peculiar of the Stoic characterizations of the *axiōma* *axiōma*, found word for word in S.E. *PH* 2.104, quoted in Greek by Aulus Gellius 16.8.4.

⁴³ D.L. 7.64: “Ἔστι δὲ τὸ κατηγορήμα τὸ κατὰ τινος ἀγορευόμενον ἢ πᾶν συντακτὸν περὶ τινος ἢ τινῶν, ὡς οἱ περὶ Ἀπολλοδώρον φασιν, ἢ λεκτὸν ἐλλυπὲς συντακτὸν ὁρθῇ πτώσει πρὸς ἀξιώματος γένεσιν.”

⁴⁴ A similar method is operative with the descriptions of the cosmos discussed at 1.3.4 above. It is not merely due to a doxographical compilation, but the many sources attest that this is a properly Stoic approach, as S.E. notes as well, in passing, in the passage discussed earlier, *M.* 8.12, when he says that the Stoics ‘also describe’ (*hoper kai hupographontes*) the *axiōma* ‘as what is true or false’.

short of the *axiōma*: (i) where the *katēgorēma* is the sort of thing which must be combined (*suntakton*), the *axiōma* is the sort of thing which can be stated (*apophanton*); (ii) where the *katēgorēma* is incomplete (*ellipes*), the *axiōma* is self-complete (*autoteles*); (iii) where the *katēgorēma* is said of something (*kata tinos*), or combined to some thing or things (*peri tinos ē tinōn*), the *axiōma* is the way it is as far as itself is concerned (*hoson eph' heautōi*); (iv) where the *katēgorēma* can form an *axiōma* (*axiōmatos genesis*), the *axiōma* is either true or false (*alēthes ē pseudos*).

These four poles of contrast help us to see the different deficiencies of the *katēgorēma* with respect to the *axiōma*. Thus, starting from the last pole, (iv), the contrast here confirms that the *katēgorēma* is indeed to be compared with the *axiōma*; pole (iii), highlights that a *katēgorēma* is relational, and the *axiōma* is not; (ii) and (i) concern a discrepancy with regard to internal structure as it relates to the production of meaningful speech. Each level of comparison bolsters through accumulation the deficiencies for the *katēgorēma*, and in what way the *axiōma* is sufficient, or self-sufficient. For both the *axiōma* and the *katēgorēma* there are two sides to these characterizations. For the *katēgorēma* is deficient in itself as stated in (ii) since it is incomplete; as stated in (iv) it can form an *axiōma*, but not on its own; and it is also deficient when it comes to getting something said by expressing it. For, as stated in (i) and (iii), the *katēgorēma* is combined with something and thus is said of something. By contrast, the *axiōma* is sufficient in itself: from (ii) we learn that it is self-complete, and from (iii) that by nature it needs nothing in addition. And the *axiōma* is also sufficient to get something said by expressing it: thus from (i) it is that in saying which we make a statement, and from (iv) it is that which is either true or false.

There are thus two distinct aspects: the *axiōma* as sufficient in itself is self-complete and subsists or obtains 'as far as itself is concerned', such that it is ready to be stated, and thus sufficient to be said, if someone expresses it. In order for it to be stated, it must actually be said through a fitting utterance. In parallel, a *katēgorēma* is deficient in itself and deficient as a thing to say, in virtue of always being combined to something. As we noted in 8.1.1 above, the first description of the *katēgorēma*, in D.L. 7.64, is an attempt at a morphological analysis of the term 'to *kata tinos agoreuomenon*'. What interests us now is the '*kata tinos*' relation, 'of something', which, in the second description listed in D.L., is expanded in terms of 'being combined to (*peri*) some thing or things'.⁴⁵ As a thing in itself, the *katēgorēma* is combined to other

⁴⁵ See in parallel Cic. *Tusc.* 4.21: '[eae res] quae dicuntur de quodam aut quibusdam, quae *katēgorēmata*, dialectici appellant', 'these things which are said about something or things, and which the Dialecticians call "*katēgorēmata*"', with the reference again presumably to a pre-Stoic origin with the Dialecticians. The important point is the explicit mention of 'about some thing or things', i.e. both the 'about' or 'of' relation and the inclusion of both the singular and plural.

things. It is thus structurally related to something other than itself. This makes it an incomplete thing to say. But there is an important difference between being an incomplete thing to say, and subsisting and obtaining as a thing which, by its nature, is combined to some thing or things.

The contrast set out in (iii) above, between the *katēgorēma*'s being combined to something and the *axiōma*'s status as 'as far as itself is concerned', is a contrast in ontology. That is, it describes the *katēgorēma* and the *axiōma* in terms which are utterly distinct from expression. Just as the *axiōma* subsists and obtains 'as far as itself is concerned' regardless of being stated, in the same way the *katēgorēma* is combined to some thing or things regardless of being expressed. It follows that insofar as the structure of reality is concerned, constituted as it is by states-of-affairs (which need not all be true), there are no *katēgorēmata* which are not combined to some thing or things. It is something about language that it is able to pick out the *katēgorēma* on its own, and when it does, something incomplete is thereby said. The Stoics then talk about the *katēgorēma* as an incomplete *lekton*. But it should be clear by now that the Stoics can acknowledge that there is such a thing as an incomplete *lekton* only by stretching the usage of 'being said'.

On the strict sense of 'being said', something being incompletely said should not count as being said at all. If we utter a correctly constructed string of words so as to form a sentence, and thereby get something said, we get one thing said which corresponds to a *lekton*. In this case, to add that this *lekton* is complete, or self-complete, and that we thereby get something complete said is in fact redundant. In uttering less than the necessary amount of words, or uttering them in the wrong order, a person does not actually say anything in the strict sense of saying. It is crucial for the theory to hold that what gets said in uttering the expression is one thing; for single words contribute to express one *lekton* and do not pick out single things in reality by directly referring to them. A *lekton* cannot thus be cut up into the single words used to express it. This is the Stoic position, against the argument from isomorphism put forward for instance by S.E. (5.1.3.2 above). S.E.'s example from *M.* 8.80 is the first line of Homer's *Iliad*, which, the Stoics hold, expresses one *lekton*, and not the piecemeal accumulation of things each single word uttered picks out, e.g. anger, then sing, then goddess, and so on. It is, rather, all the words enlisted which jointly contribute to the expression of one *lekton*.

However, we do get incomplete things said, that is to say, they are not things which are merely named, but at the same time they are said derivatively on what it is to be said, on this deep understanding of saying. In particular, the Stoics acknowledge that we can get a *katēgorēma* said on this derivative understanding. For, whilst failing to get something said in the strict sense if we utter the expression 'writes' or 'sing', we do get something said, but it is something incomplete in comparison with what a whole sentence expresses.

But it is not any kind of incomplete thing which gets said. Rather, an incomplete *lekton* counts as incomplete in that what gets said is precisely something which is said of something, only what that other thing is has not been expressed. The claim put forward, therefore, in these pages is the following: that it is only because in reality (i.e. in the way ontology is structured), the *katēgorēma* is always and only said of something, that when we speak, and utter only the words which contribute to the expression of the *katēgorēma*, we manage to get something said, though it is incomplete. Thus the uttering of ‘writes’, gets something said, because, in reality, writes is said of something. There is a propositional articulation of which it is part. For within the ontological structure there are no such things as incomplete *lekta*. The self-completeness of each co-constituent unit guarantees that when we speak, we can get incomplete things said, which correspond to the *katēgorēma* part of the nuclear units of the ontological framework. This means that, as we shall see at 9.1.3 below, no other possible candidate can count as an incomplete *lekton*.

8.2.2. How to Express a *Katēgorēma*

8.2.2.1. *The Infinitive Form and the Conjugated Form*

In our extant texts in which the ontological status of the *katēgorēma* is discussed in terms of the role it plays in the ontological structure of the world (notably, but not only, in causation), the *katēgorēma* is represented by a verb in the infinitive form. By contrast, in texts which report how, by expressing a *katēgorēma*, we get something incomplete said, the expression corresponding to the *katēgorēma* is a conjugated form of the verb.⁴⁶ This suggests that the Stoics make a distinction between discussions of the *katēgorēma* as an ontological item, and the question of the expression of the *katēgorēma*.

As we know, a cause is a cause of a *katēgorēma*. The *katēgorēma* is represented in our texts by an infinitival verbal form introduced by a neutral article—I deliberately say ‘represented’ and not expressed, since the context and formulation make it clear that it is not in terms of a signifying utterance that the *katēgorēma* is discussed here. The infinitive form used is thus not considered as a linguistic form, but stands for or represents the *katēgorēma* as an ontological item. Hence an emphatic stiffness and artificiality of formulation: e.g. the corporeal entity wisdom is said to be the cause of the being wise, or the to be wise (*to phronein*)—which are ontological items and not

⁴⁶ There is a general consensus amongst commentators that there is such a difference according to the different contexts: see BRUNSWCHIG 1995c, ILDEFONSE 1997 pp.194–7, GASKIN 1997 pp.97–8 and 107.

utterances—just as the soul is the cause of the being alive (*to zēn*).⁴⁷ In the debate opposing Stoics and Peripatetics, the Stoics say the sun is the cause of the being melted (*to cheisthai*), whereas the Peripatetics say the sun is the cause of the melting (*hē chusis*).⁴⁸ As for impulses and desires, they are directed towards *katēgorēmata*, again represented by infinitive forms.⁴⁹ The *katēgorēma* in these contexts is often contrasted to a corporeal entity in terms of a direct or indirect relation to our desires: corporeal things are what we wish to possess (so we have an indirect relation to them, since we will do something in order to possess them), but what we wish and what we desire are incorporeal *katēgorēmata*:

desire is of those things which the dialecticians call ‘*katēgorēmata*’, such as having riches, receiving honours⁵⁰

We have a direct relation to *katēgorēmata* insofar as the impulse or desire for them maps onto the causal schema such that the desire is for the *katēgorēma* to obtain with respect to us. In the Latin of Cicero, the presence of the definite neutral article in front of the infinitival forms has disappeared, as it has disappeared in Seneca’s report of the same point in *Ep.* 117.4–5: we desire to be wise, and not wisdom.⁵¹ But the article is there in the Greek sources:

we choose to possess wisdom and prudence, but certainly not the being wise and being prudent, which are incorporeal and are *katēgorēmata*.⁵²

⁴⁷ Stob. *Ecl.* 1.13.1c.6–8, and see text at 7.2 with n.15 above.

⁴⁸ S.E. *PH* 3.14; *M.* 9.211; Clem. *Strom.* 8.9.26.4, and see texts at 7.3 with nn.31–2. I do not bracket the *katēgorēmata* here, there is no need: we see how the Stoics make no concessions to linguistic expression but articulate the examples with the same artificiality as the English rendition here, making it clear, through the use of the article, that they are talking about a thing distinct from the body which the noun indicates. That this same practice is found in all the relevant source texts confirms this as a Stoic practice.

⁴⁹ Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.11f.8–10, and see 7.2.5 above.

⁵⁰ Cic. *Tusc.* 4.21: ‘libido sit earum rerum . . . quae *katēgorēmata* dialectici appellant, ut habere divitias, capere honores’. On the absence of the neutral article in front of a verbal nominalized form in Latin (infinitive or participle), Priscian (*Inst.* 11.1, p.548.10–14) notes in passing that the ‘Stoic writers’ reserved a special term, which Priscian gives in Latin as ‘*finitum articulum*’, a definite articulator, which, he says, the Romans just do not have. It is more than a question of Greek compared to Latin here, but also something about a Stoic practice in particular that Priscian is drawing attention to.

⁵¹ Even without the article, there is an artificiality of language which Seneca is especially vocal about, thus, in *Ep.* 117.5: ‘coguntur nostri verba torquere’, ‘we Stoics, are forced to distort language’, in order to accommodate the distinct reality of the *katēgorēma*; and see Cic. *Fin.* 5.89 (directed at the Stoics): ‘aliter homines, aliter philosophos loqui putas oportere?’, ‘do you think that philosophers should speak a different language from ordinary people?’, as also Galen *Inst. Log.* 3.2, 3.5 and Galen, *Meth. Med.* 155.1–9. See more in ATHERTON 1993 pp.117–24.

⁵² Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.11f.14–15: ‘Τὴν γὰρ φρόνησιν αἰρούμεθα ἔχειν καὶ τὴν σωφροσύνην, οὐ μὰ Δία τὸ φρονεῖν καὶ σωφρονεῖν, ἀσώματα ὄντα καὶ κατηγορήματα’. See also the formulation of a sophism associated with the Stoics which turns on us desiring to drink water rather than desiring water, recorded in S.E. *PH* 2.230 in a garbled version, perhaps precisely due to where the definite

The presence of the article is the marker of the Stoics' emphasis that they thus pick out an item in ontology, and that this is not merely a question of how the surface grammar of language works, namely that after a desiderative verb, such as 'I desire' or 'I wish', there follows an infinitival construct. Rather, the point is that the surface grammar evolves from an ontological configuration—a configuration which corresponds to a state-of-affairs with respect to which a body or bodies enter into a relation by acting or being acted upon so as to create the conditions for the state-of-affairs to obtain or subsist. These relations are governed by the conditions for obtaining of the *katēgorēma*.

But in D.L. 7.63–4, examples of a *katēgorēma* are 'writes', 'hears', 'sees', 'speaks', 'walks', and so on.⁵³ These are all conjugated verbs. Though most are in the third person singular, verbs in passive mode are also listed, such as 'I am heard' and 'I am seen'. All verbal forms here are deficient expressions of a full sentence. The subject term is missing or, in the case of the passive formulations, the agent term is missing. It thus appears that the Stoics differentiate between the use in speech of verbal forms, which are conjugated and which are analysed as getting an incomplete *lekton* said, and the infinitive form, which stands in for the incorporeal item whose status in ontology is contrasted with that of corporeals. The infinitive is not considered as a linguistic expression, as is further exemplified in a passage previously commented on from S.E. *M.* 8.100 (7.6.3 with n.90 above) in which an *axiōma*, expressed by a sentence, which naturally includes a conjugated verb, is analysed as obtaining in virtue of the *katēgorēma* standing in a specific relation to a body. The subsequent analysis of this specific relation is presented in terms of an infinitival form standing in a relation of 'having happened to' to the body:

this one *is sitting*' or 'this one *is walking*', they say, obtain as true, whenever the *katēgorēma*, e.g. [*to be sitting*] or [*to walk*] has happened to what falls under the demonstrative indicator.⁵⁴

article is placed (cf. ATHERTON 1993 p.439); Clem. *Strom.* 7.7.38.2: 'οὐδεὶς ἐπιθυμεῖ πόματος, ἀλλὰ τοῦ πλεῖν τὸ ποτόν' (see 7.2.5 and n.72 above).

⁵³ With one exception, found in the corrupt lines in the middle of D.L. 7.64, in which an example of a sub-kind of *katēgorēma* is given with an infinitive as 'διὰ πέτρας πλεῖν', 'to sail through a rock'. The lacuna makes it difficult to understand which kind exactly, but we find the example mentioned elsewhere, in S.E. *M.* 8.297 and *Simpl. in Phys.* 1039.18–19, as an impossible *katēgorēma*. EGLI 1967 p.34 suggests emending 'πλεῖν' to 'πλεῖ', followed by HÜLSER *FDS* frag. 696, to align the example of a conjugated verb with the others in the passage. The line, however, is far too corrupt to be of any weight in its present state; according to one suggestion, cf. SZYMANSKI 1992, it is the result of a mix of two different examples, 'περιπατεῖ' and 'μετάμελει'.

⁵⁴ S.E. *M.* 8.100: 'τὸ "οὗτος κάθηται" ἢ "οὗτος περιπατεῖ", τότε φασὶν ἀληθὲς ὑπάρχειν, ὅταν τῷ ὑπὸ τὴν δεῖξιν πίπτοντι συμβεβήκη τὸ κατηγορήμα, οἷον τὸ καθῆσθαι ἢ τὸ περιπατεῖν'.

I have italicized the verbal forms to focus our attention on this aspect of the testimony.⁵⁵ For they highlight the double perspective which we are now considering: namely that the conjugated form of a verb is the expression of the thing represented by the infinitival form. The infinitive is appealed to in articulating the logical configuration that sets out the terms of the relation between an incorporeal and a corporeal entity. The conjugated form belongs to the concern of expression, i.e. the signifier branch of dialectic. The sentence used to express an *axiōma* ('this one is sitting') is an example of a properly constructed, grammatically correct sentence in English; the analysis, by contrast, of its truth conditions, which themselves rely on setting out the ontological status of the state-of-affairs corresponding to the *axiōma*, is not expressed through a properly constructed sentence, but in an artificial presentation in which the *katēgorēma* [to be sitting] is shown to stand in a has-happened relation to a body.

The distinction between conjugated verbal form and the infinitive is distantly echoed in the ancient Grammarians. Thus Apollonius Dyscolus claims that the Stoics distinguish between a *rhēma* (verb) and a *katēgorēma* on the basis that the verb corresponds to the infinitive form and the *katēgorēma* to the conjugated form.⁵⁶ Why would Apollonius specifically name the Stoics for a claim which is not congruous with Stoic doctrine? After all, a verb, for the Stoics, is an expression 'which signifies a *katēgorēma*' (D.L. 7.58). The answer lies perhaps in those very lines in D.L. 7.58, for the verb is characterized there as signifying an 'uncombined (*asuntheton*) *katēgorēma*'. It is not too difficult to see how, for Apollonius, the uncombined *katēgorēma* comes to indicate the infinitival form as the verb, whereas a *katēgorēma*, which is not uncombined, that is to say in effect combined, comes to be identified as the conjugated verb. Apollonius does not respect the Stoic distinction between an expression and what is thereby expressed. But he preserves the trace of a differentiation which the Stoics make between the infinitive form and the conjugated form of the verb by explaining it in terms of a distinction between uncombined and combined. For Apollonius, the part of Stoic philosophy which is concerned with ontological structure, and which is distinct and independent from any concerns regarding language, is brushed aside.⁵⁷ This means that the infinitival form, which seems reserved to designate the incorporeal item in reality, does not represent, on Apollonius' reading, a *katēgorēma*, which, for him, corresponds to the signifying verbal element of a sentence. What Apollonius retains

⁵⁵ It is neither the 'has happened' (*sumbebēkei*) relation discussed previously (7.6.3 above), nor the status of the body, nor its relation to the *deixis* (one kind of case-*ptōsis*, on which see 9.2.5–6 below) that is our concern here.

⁵⁶ Ap. Dysc. *Synt.* 1.43.15–16.

⁵⁷ As discussed in 6.1.2 with n.15 above. See ILDEFONSE 1997 pp.262–71, in particular on how the logical distinction morphs into a distinction between linguistic form and linguistic signification.

is the Stoic lore concerning the parts of speech and what they signify. He no longer respects, as logically separate, the distinction between signifier and what is signified. He thus inherits the Stoic talk of *katēgorēmata* from the contexts in which the *katēgorēma* is discussed as an incomplete thing said, not from the texts for instance, about causation. This thus confirms that, when it comes to talk of incomplete *lekta*, the *katēgorēma* is always expressed by a conjugated form of the verb.

8.2.2.2. Clement's Testimony: a Misleading Account of Ptōsis

Clement preserves some traces of a distinction between the conjugated form of the verb and the infinitival form. His report is marred by confused or at best heterodox insertions, which are typical of the confusion which has shrouded the Stoic theory of *lekta* ever since. It is however a useful starting point. In a passage already mentioned (7.3 above), Clement presents the Stoic view that causes are causes of *katēgorēmata*. For the sake of ease, here is the passage in full once more:

On this view, causes are causes of *katēgorēmata*, or, as some say, of *lekta* (for Cleanthes and Archedemus call *katēgorēmata*, 'lekta'). Or we shall say this—and this is actually better—some causes are causes of *katēgorēmata*, e.g. [is cut], whose case is the [to be cut], and others are causes of *axiōmata*, e.g. [a ship is coming to be], whose case is the [to come to be of the ship]. But for Aristotle, causes are causes of appellatives, such as a house, a ship, a burn, a cut.⁵⁸

The example Clement gives of the *katēgorēma* the cause is a cause of, is, contrarily to what has just been claimed, a conjugated form, [is cut]. Clement adds that this form has a corresponding 'case', which is the term I translate for the Greek 'ptōsis' here. It is not the first time we come across the Greek term in our discussions of the Stoics, for which the hybrid coinage 'case-ptōsis' has been used precisely in order to demarcate a specific, and authentic, Stoic usage of the Greek term 'ptōsis'. It is, however, a usage which does not resonate with what Clement transmits here. For Clement seems to make use of the notion of a case to distinguish a morphological matrix from its inflections.

This is a distinction for which Aristotle puts the term 'case' to use in the *De Interpretatione*, though in a directly opposite way from what we find here in Clement. For Aristotle calls the declensions of nouns the 'cases of names' ('ptōseis onomatos', *Int.* 2, 16a32–16b1), and the conjugated forms of verbs the 'case of the verb' ('ptōsis rhēmatos', *Int.* 3, 16b16–17). That is to say that 'case'

⁵⁸ Clem. *Strom.* 8.9.26.4: 'Εἰς ὃν λόγον κατηγορημάτων ἢ, ὡς τινες, λεκτῶν (λεκτὰ γὰρ τὰ κατηγορήματα καλοῦσιν Κλεάνθης καὶ Ἀρχέδημος) <αἷτια> τὰ αἷτια ἢ, ὅπερ καὶ μᾶλλον, τὰ μὲν κατηγορημάτων αἷτια λεχθήσεται, οἷον τοῦ <<τέμνεται>, οὐ πτώσις τὸ τέμνεσθαι, τὰ δ' ἀξιωμαίων, ὡς τοῦ "ναὺς γίνεταί", γίνεταί, οὐ πάλιν ἡ πτώσις ἐστὶ τὸ ναὺν γίνεσθαι. Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ προσηγορίων, οἷον τῶν τοιούτων, οἰκίας, νεώς, καύσεως, τομῆς.'

for Aristotle designates not the infinitive but the conjugated form of the verb. Thus, though he reverses the use, Clement is echoing an Aristotelian distinction, according to which a core morphological form serves as a matrix for a variety of inflections or declensions. It is to this day the more familiar association we have with the notion of a grammatical case. But this is not a distinction with which the Stoics associate the term '*ptōsis*'. Though there is more to say about the case-*ptōsis* than so far discussed, we have already seen that the case-*ptōsis* appears in our relevant contexts as that which combines with the *katēgorēma* to form an *axiōma* (D.L. 7.64, cf. 8.2.1 n.43 above). What we find in Clement is one aspect of the confusions created from the association of a general Aristotelian tradition surrounding the term, and elements of a distinct Stoic usage.⁵⁹

When Clement speaks of the *ptōsis*, he is considering that a *ptōsis* corresponds to an incorporeal thing in reality. It is 'an incorporeal thing, which passes through our mouths' when we speak.⁶⁰ This is Clement's conclusion, drawn from the sophism he reports about how, when you utter 'a house', it is not a house that comes out of your mouth; not a house, but an incorporeal *ptōsis*. The sophism has Stoic credentials (with a similar wagon sophism reported at D.L. 7.187), but it is Clement who magnifies its importance so as to establish on its (dubious) grounds his own talk of *ptōsis*, which is absent from the Stoic context of the sophism. It is therefore misleading if attributed to the Stoics, but also if attributed to the Peripatetics. For Clement claims that Aristotle 'agrees that a *ptōsis* is incorporeal'. We could, and perhaps should, leave things as they are in their entangled confusion.⁶¹

However, Clement's testimony has been taken to corroborate an interpretation according to which (i) a *ptōsis* is one kind of *lekton*, given that it is said to be an incorporeal thing and (ii) a *katēgorēma* is not necessarily expressed by a verb but also by a noun, namely the verbal noun which corresponds to the infinitive with the neuter article.⁶² On this reading, the mention of the *ptōsis* is neither confused nor dismissible. Clement is understood as attributing to the Stoics the view that causes are causes both of items indicated by the infinitive (plus article), which are the *ptōseis*, and of items designated by conjugated forms of a verb, which are *katēgorēmata*. Thus the to be cut and [is cut] are two different kinds of effects of a cause. This brings to a total of four the kinds of items a cause can be the cause of: the *katēgorēma*, its case, the *axiōma*, and its case.

Gaskin explains this profusion of 'lektical items' as over-zealousness on Clement's part. The claim is that Clement is so concerned to bring out the

⁵⁹ On the heteroclitite background Clement draws on here see FREDE 1987a pp.350–1 and HAVRDA 2016 pp.276–7.

⁶⁰ Clem. *Strom.* 8.9.26.5 with the example of the house, as discussed in 8.1.3.2 n.21 above.

⁶¹ As ILDEFONSE 1997 p.196.

⁶² See GASKIN 1997 *esp.* pp.97–8.

contrast between the Peripatetic appellatives and the Stoic *katēgorēmata* that he considers the *to be cut* (i.e. the infinitive with the article) not to represent clearly enough the Stoic position about effects, which needs to be ‘more verbal’ in contrast to the Peripatetic appellative. According to Gaskin, Clement considers that the *to be cut* (*to temnesthai*) is a *ptōsis*, and therefore can fill in the subject role in a proposition, and is thus ultimately interchangeable with the appellative.

There are two assumptions here: (i) that Clement is correctly reporting a Stoic lesson about *ptōsis*, namely that it is an incorporeal thing which stands for itself, just as a *katēgorēma* stands for itself, and (ii) that a *ptōsis* is represented by a nominal phrase or noun. It is highly doubtful that (i) for some reasons already given (and more to come: see 9.2.3 below); as for (ii), our main Stoic sources do not say as much. Nominal phrases, nouns, and names are said to signify qualities (D.L. 7.58), not a *ptōsis*, which appears only as standing in a subordinate relation to a *katēgorēma* (which is said of the *ptōsis*). But the *ptōsis* in itself does not stand for a subject-place filler in a proposition. Gaskin is in fact reading Clement as projecting onto the Stoics a correspondence between grammatical functions in a sentence and ‘lektikal items’ as he calls them. It is a stringent argument from isomorphism, according to which each nominal or verbal form corresponds to a definite function in a sentence, which itself is reflected at ‘a lektikal level’ in the different constituents of a *lekton*, which, taken separately, are incomplete *lekta*.

Keeping close to the text, however, it does not seem that Clement moves from the level of expression to the level of the *lekton*; rather, all his claims are about *lekta*. Gaskin is right that Clement is attempting to explain how the Stoics associate the *ptōsis* with talk of *katēgorēmata*. And he is undoubtedly also right that Clement is concerned with accounting for the distinction he observes in his Stoic sources between the infinitival form of the verb and the conjugated form. But Gaskin puts all the weight on Clement’s introduction of *ptōsis*. However this surely must be the most fragile part of Clement’s testimony, since the presence of the *ptōsis* in the Stoic context is one of the elements of doctrine Clement is supposedly accounting for, whilst at the same time Clement is using it (in an idiosyncratic way) to explain the discrepancy in verbal form between infinitive and conjugated form. Given that there is no other testimony in which the Stoics say that the infinitive form corresponds to a *ptōsis*,⁶³

⁶³ The closest perhaps is Apollonius in the passage referred to in n.56 above (*Synt.* 1.43.5–14), who projects on the Stoics a distinction between ‘verb’ for the infinitive and ‘*katēgorēma*’ for the conjugated forms. But in this passage he is arguing that the Stoics are mistaken, because infinitives are actually the ‘name (*onoma*) of the verb’. He is arguing this also against Trypho, the Grammarian named at *Synt.* 1.43.5 at the beginning of the discussion about infinitives, who claims that the infinitive is sometimes a name (when it is accompanied by the article), and a verb without the article. The Grammarians’ move to recategorize the infinitive in a nominal category

Clement's claim is highly doubtful (unlike his aside about *katēgorēmata* being *lekta*, which is well attested). Where I therefore disagree with Gaskin is on what Clement's foremost concern is here. It is not the supposedly Stoic notion of the *ptōsis*, but the first claim, the one which is (unlike the claim about the *ptōsis*) exponentially credited to direct Stoic sources, namely that Cleanthes and Archedemus say that *katēgorēmata* are *lekta*.

What Clement is attempting to explain is what it means to say that a *katēgorēma* is a *lekton*. The source of the confusion in Clement is in his merging two Stoic views and adding an unwarranted claim of his own: the two Stoic views are (i) that *katēgorēmata* are kinds of *lekta*, (ii) that a cause is a cause of a *katēgorēma*. The examples he gives merge examples which, in other texts, are reserved for either (i) or (ii). Clement's testimony is valuable precisely because of the merger he draws attention to. He confirms that the *katēgorēmata* discussed in the contexts of Stoic causation are indeed the same items which appear in contexts discussing the production of language and the relation of *lekta* with language. Clement attempts to bridge what seems to him a gap between how the *katēgorēma* is presented in the context of causation (in the guise of an infinitive), and how the *katēgorēma* is presented in an account of language (as an incomplete thing said). But this attempt (though it generates confusion because of the term '*ptōsis*') confirms that the reference to Cleanthes is reliable. The reference to Cleanthes is what Clement has read about in his sources, the rest is Clement's attempt at commenting and explaining this puzzling element of doctrine. Putting forward the *ptōsis* is one attempt at explaining. The reference to Cleanthes as the first Stoic to have said *katēgorēmata* are *lekta* is thus a valuable historical contribution. As Clement grapples with the implications of this identification, he shows that to understand it properly one must be able to account for the consistency of an ontology constituted by *katēgorēmata* which are *lekta*. That is to say, an ontology constituted of items which have, as a characteristic, that they are what gets said when we speak, i.e. by uttering whole sentences. With the examples, he shows how he understands that these two contexts, ontology and language, are concerned with one and the same item. When Clement remarks 'and this is actually better', namely saying that causes are sometimes said to be of *katēgorēmata*, and sometimes of *axiōmata*, he emphasizes how natural the shift is from talk of a *katēgorēma* to talk of a complete *lekton*, specifically an *axiōma*. Thus the main point to exemplify for Clement is precisely the smooth transition from one to the other.

It is Clement's own unwarranted extrapolation to further distinguish the infinitival form as a *ptōsis*. His doing so is both a testimony that he found, in Stoic texts, that *katēgorēmata* are expressed by both conjugated and infinitival

is thus carried out in explicit contrast with the Stoic position (however misrepresented it may be). But Clement's suggestion is close to Apollonius, and thus not to the Stoics.

forms of the verb, and that this observation necessitated an explanation. Clement gives the explanation by hauling in another term he presumably finds in the constellation surrounding *lekta* and *katēgorēmata*, namely *ptōsis*. But this is not a Stoic explanation. As Gaskin acknowledges, Clement is misled by surface grammar: though he is not talking about expressions, but the real items causes are causes of, the explanation he gives is guided by the expressions and the seemingly nominal form of the infinitive with the article, and not by the items thereby expressed.

8.2.2.3. Conclusion: the Pivotal Role of the *Katēgorēma* for the Unity of the *Lekton*

The Stoics prefer to use the infinitive form of a verb to speak of the incorporeal item in reality, the *katēgorēma*, which is contrasted to the corporeal, and which stands in a set of relations to one or more corporeal items. Brunschwig describes this preference for the infinitive as ‘the normal expression’ of the *katēgorēma*.⁶⁴ By ‘normal’ we are to understand not that this is merely a convention based on a habitual and thus normative usage, but rather that the infinitive precisely captures all the necessary and thus standard features which make a *katēgorēma* a *katēgorēma*. This is not because the infinitive is more nominal or less verbal, as Gaskin puts it; nor is the conjugated form a ‘more verbal’ expression of the *katēgorēma*. In fact it is misleading to think of the infinitive and the conjugated forms of the verb as two ways of expressing the *katēgorēma*. Brunschwig himself should have perhaps been more clear: the ‘normal’ way of referring to a *katēgorēma* is by not picking it out through an expression which is meant to express it.

The infinitive represents the state-of-affairs corresponding to the *katēgorēma* and what it is said of, such that the infinitive stands for a proto-linguistic use. If we want actually to express in speech the state-of-affairs in question, then we use a sentence in which we find, amongst other things, a conjugated verb. Taken on its own, the conjugated verb expresses something incomplete. The difference between the ‘normal’ use of the infinitive for the *katēgorēma* and the conjugated verb form which expresses the *katēgorēma* is therefore not a difference in degree (i.e. more or less verbal) but a difference in context and analytical focus.

There is thus a context of discussion, of which we have a group of texts, in which *katēgorēmata* and *lekta* are discussed separately from language, as items constituting the ontological framework. There is a different context in which *katēgorēmata* and *lekta* are discussed as what we get said when we speak. We could leave these two discussions like this, distinct and separate. But things are

⁶⁴ BRUNSCHWIG 1995c p.258.

more complicated and imbricated. Firstly, because the truth conditions of *axiōmata* depend on the ontological status of *axiōmata*. Secondly, because the discussion of *lekta* within the discussion of language, i.e. the production of meaningful language, is, at every step of the way imbricated with the ontological structure which is being expressed. Hence ‘Socrates is walking’ is analysed in terms of to walk obtaining with respect to Socrates (as we learn from S.E. M. 8.1; see 8.2.2.1 n.54 above).

There are, furthermore, indications in our texts that the Stoics make a distinction between what words or a group of words signify in themselves and conditions of utterance. For complete and incomplete *lekta* are distinguished in terms of what the words used to express them manage to express without any reference to conditions of utterance:

incomplete *lekta* have an unfinished enunciation: e.g. writes.

self-complete *lekta* have a finished enunciation: e.g. Socrates writes.⁶⁵

An incomplete *lekton* has thus something missing in the enunciation, and not in the *lekton* itself. There are a number of key passages (in the reports found in D.L. and S.E.⁶⁶) which attest that the Stoics speak specifically of the ‘enunciation’ (*ekphora*) of a *lekton* as a way of analysing in more depth the tensions arising in the relation that binds signifying (corporeal) expressions to *lekta*.

As has been noted in the scholarly literature, the example D.L. gives for an incomplete *lekton*, the Greek ‘*graphei*’, can already, unlike its English counterpart ‘writes’, constitute a sentence and thus be expressing something complete.⁶⁷ For in Greek the conjugated verb already implies its subject, such that, in a given context, by uttering ‘*graphei*’ in Greek we thereby get something complete said, which, according to the context, would correspond to ‘he, or she, writes’.⁶⁸ The suggestion that D.L. is in fact giving an example of a sentence is doubtful, however, given that his example, expressed by a conjugated verb, ‘writes’, is in line with the series of examples immediately following, given for *katēgorēmata*. It is therefore more likely that here too D.L. is isolating one kind of signifier.

It follows that it is not the actual act of utterance which is under scrutiny here; the act, that is, which is carried out in a time and place and thus implies the context specifications which would transform ‘*graphei*’ from an incomplete to a complete thing said (this is the context of utterance as discussed in 6.2.3 above). What is revealed here is rather the Stoics’ concern for how

⁶⁵ D.L. 7.63: ‘ἐλλιπή μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ τὰ ἀναπάρτιστον ἔχοντα τὴν ἐκφοράν, οἷον Γράφει· [...] αὐτοτελή δ’ ἐστὶ τὰ ἀπηρτισμένην ἔχοντα τὴν ἐκφοράν, οἷον Γράφει Σωκράτης’.

⁶⁶ See D.L. 7.49, 7.63, 7.67; S.E. M. 8.96.

⁶⁷ See FREDE 1974 p.36; DETEL et al. 1980.

⁶⁸ In this light, DETEL et al. 1980 p.279 take the view that the example in D.L. is an example of a full sentence, and that therefore also certain sentences can express incomplete *lekta*, where what is missing is not a subject but context specifications.

language, in concrete terms, maps onto the ontological configuration it has the capacity to grasp. The mode of functioning of language, a process of accumulating and ordering different kinds of signifiers, presents opposite traits of configuration from the structural, relational configuration of *lekta* (fundamentally, corresponding to *katēgorēmata* which, by their very nature, are said of something). Thus the conjugated verb gets only one aspect of the *katēgorēma* expressed, namely the thing which is said of, but not that of which it is said—though, in reality, the *katēgorēma* is not separated from what it is said of. For ‘writes’, say, subsists or obtains (i.e. is real) only insofar as it is attributed to something (e.g. a case-*ptōsis*). A *lekton* is thus incomplete when, in attempting to express it, something incomplete has been said because of an unfinished enunciation of the *lekton*. As expected, a full enunciation, in contrast to the deficient enunciation, is one in which is expressed that of which the *katēgorēma* is said: e.g. ‘Socrates writes’ (*‘graphei Sōkratēs’*). From the perspective of ontological structure and the internal articulation of states-of-affairs, these constituents are present whether expressed or not. It is not by expressing them that they are conjured into reality. But rather, their nuclear relation guarantees that there is a smooth reciprocity in a *katēgorēma*’s obtaining with respect to something, and the corresponding *axiōma* constituted by the *katēgorēma* and that of which it is said: the sun is thus the cause of the to be melted obtaining with respect to the wax, or is the cause of that the wax is melted.

Brunschwig suggests that, as long as the *katēgorēma* is discussed purely with regard to its role and place within the ontological structure, then the infinitive is all that is necessary to represent it in contrast with the other items it relates to, but that, at a certain point, when the theory of language is further developed (in particular by Chrysippus), its expression by a conjugated verb is required to express the relations it stands in.⁶⁹ That there is a chronological development from an initial focus on the role of *lekta* in causation has been adumbrated in these pages. But this is not the same as suggesting that the question of the expression of the *katēgorēma* arises at a later stage of a development of a theory of language. For the debate about causation rests in part precisely on the identification by the Stoics of the relational character of the *katēgorēma* a cause is a cause of, especially with the analysis of the qualitative states which are caused by the *hexis* or soul contained in the body receiving the effect of the latter’s activity. Thus wisdom causes the body it is in to be wise, which corresponds to the state-of-affairs according to which the body it is in is wise.

When the Peripatetics dismiss the Stoic analysis, saying that predication is a mere logical tool (7.3.1 above), they are challenging the independent status

⁶⁹ BRUNSCHWIG 1995c pp.258–9.

the Stoics grant to what is expressed by the conjugated form (e.g. ‘writes’). Thus the Stoic analysis, whether taken in and for itself, or against the Peripatetic account, is grounded on the *axiōmatic* structure of states-of-affairs. Paradigmatically with the causal account framing qualitative states, what is accounted for is the independent status of the *axiōma*, e.g. of [Socrates is wise]. The identification by the Stoics of the nature and role of the *katēgorēma* is the Stoic radical move in the debate about causation. For by identifying the *katēgorēma* as a thing in itself, whose nature is relational, the Stoics are able to set out the kind of ontological configuration which guarantees the truth of the *axiōma* (and failing which, guarantees its falsity).

The Stoic analysis of the *katēgorēma* as an ontological item grounds the nuclear relation which constitutes all *lekta*. This nuclear relation is based on something’s being said of something, where ‘being said of’ is not a logical tool to express a property’s belonging to something, but the very status of the *katēgorēma*, i.e. its obtaining, insofar as it is attributed to something in the case of a true attribution, or its subsisting, when it is the opposite of a true attribution. There is thus a grounding propositional structure of *lekta*. It is the structure which we grasp, as rational beings, arranging sense-data, from our earliest stages of rational development, into the propositional order whereby we have impressions of x’s as F’s (e.g. of the page in front of us as white). We discussed the implications of this rationalization over the content of our impressions in 2.2.5 above. It is a process which is not separate from the mastery of language, that is, the process by which we learn the laws governing a language such as to be able to actually get something said. In this light, a passage which, in the earlier pages just mentioned, was the focus for a discussion on the fundamentality of propositional structure deserves a further examination:

thought which is capable of speech, enunciates in propositional form that which has been received by the impression⁷⁰

D.L. reports the use of ‘enunciates’ (*ekpherei*), to describe the expression of the articulated content of our impressions. In this context, this usage cannot but echo quite precisely the talk of finished and unfinished enunciations (*ekphorai*) we find a few paragraphs later in D.L. 7.63–7. What is important to underline—whether or not we take the presence of *ekpherein* as specific to this context—is that language and thought function so as to articulate or enunciate the ‘*logos*’, here the propositional content or the nuclear relation which constitutes *lekta*.

What *ekpherein* and its cognates add is that language works by unfolding the articulation which grounds a *lekton*. What is unified and bound in terms

⁷⁰ D.L. 7.49: ‘ἡ διάνοια ἐκκλητική ὑπάρχουσα, ὃ πάσχει ὑπὸ τῆς φαντασίας, τοῦτο ἐκφέρει λόγῳ’.

of ontological structure is reeled out in language through an ordered accumulation of words. Such are the limitations of language, that it is incapable of mirroring the unity of the individual states-of-affairs which constitute reality. At the same time, its *raison d'être*, that is to say its foundations in rationality, means that language (and thought) is the expression of *lekta*, which correspond to these states-of-affairs. Thus language, in virtue of its own piecemeal accumulative mode of expression, is capable of expressing a *lekton*. That is what makes a language, a language, since the basic criterion is to express *lekta*. But some pieces from the linguistic complex are able to get something said, though it is an incomplete thing said. The contention in these pages is that this is possible only in virtue of the reality of the unit, which is the *lekton* in reality.

Thus uttering 'writes' only gets something incomplete said, because there is a (complete) *lekton* there to be said. Qualifying a *lekton* as complete only has force in contrast to the incomplete thing said, expressed by the utterance of an unfinished sentence. Uttering 'writes' picks out the *katēgorēma* which subsists or obtains only in virtue of the *katēgorēma*'s being said of something—regardless of whether the speaker is capable of finishing his utterance or not. Thus the centrality of the *katēgorēma* in fixing whether the *lekton* it constitutes obtains or subsists, also seems to make it the thing we can get said though we utter an unfinished enunciation. The *katēgorēma* is the only example we find in our texts for an incomplete *lekton*. In light of what it takes to constitute something which is said, even incompletely, there is, naturally, a question about the other components of the sentence. Why is the separate utterance of every part of the linguistic complex not an unfinished enunciation of a *lekton*? To answer this question it remains for us to examine in detail the nuclear relation which is at the basis of the syntax of the *lekton*.

The Syntax of *Lekta*

9.1. THE SENTENCE: THE PLATONIC TRADITION VS. THE STOICS

In Plato's *Sophist* the Eleatic Stranger establishes the components of the 'shortest and first' meaningful form of speech, which he designates as a '*logos*'. These components, as we mentioned in an earlier section (5.1.1 above), are the name (*onoma*) and the verb (*rhēma*), distinguished for the first time according to their role in the formation of a sentence. Witness to the originality of the distinction is the surprised reaction of Theaetetus in the dialogue.¹ The roles of name and verb in a sentence are complementary: verbs reveal actions ('*praxeis*') (*Soph.* 262a3), and names stand for 'those carrying out these actions' ('*ekeinas prattousi*', *Soph.* 262a6). These criss-cross definitions lay out the ground for the Stranger's claim that names and verbs combine in an 'interweaving' ('*sumplokē*') so as to produce the most basic *logos*, parsed as 'the shortest and primary' sentence.² This sentence is the 'shortest' because there can be no fewer components than those which have been thus distinguished. This makes the name and the verb the minimal

¹ As noted in 5.1.3.2 with n.25 above; see Theaetetus' reaction at *Soph.* 262a12: 'ταῦτ' οὐκ ἔμαθον', 'I didn't know these things'. A surprise echoed at almost each of Theaetetus' subsequent monosyllabic interjections throughout *Soph.* 261e3–262d1: 'πῶς;' ('how so?'). See DENYER 1991 pp.148–50 on the originality of Plato's distinction, in particular on the originality of the way the distinction is made here in the *Sophist* in comparison with other passages, especially from the *Cratylus* (e.g. at *Crat.* 399b1 or 425a1–5) in which the distinction is indeed broached, but not according to the syntactical characterization we find in the *Sophist*, i.e. according to the roles that names and verbs have within a *logos*.

² Plato *Soph.* 262c5–d1: the buildup establishing the minimal constituents of the sentence is belaboured over a few lines: 'τότε δ' ἤρμωσέν τε καὶ λόγος ἐγένετο εὐθύς ἡ πρώτη συμπλοκή, σχεδὸν τῶν λόγων ὁ πρῶτός τε καὶ μικρότατος. – ΘΕΑΙ. Πῶς ἄρ' ὥδε λέγεις; – ΞΕ. Ὄταν εἴπῃ τις: "ἄνθρωπος μανθάνει", λόγον εἶναι φῆς τοῦτον ἐλάχιστόν τε καὶ πρῶτον; – ΘΕΑΙ. Ἐγώ γε.', 'then he joined [name and verb] together and meaningful speech came about directly from the first interweaving, which is, I suppose, the first and shortest kind of sentence. – What do you mean? – When someone says, "Man learns", would you say that is the shortest and first kind of sentence? – I would.'

and necessary components of a sentence—‘first’ or ‘primary’ because it corresponds to the basic combination of these two items.

The Eleatic Stranger moves on to make the distinction between naming and saying (*Soph.* 262d5) which we discussed earlier (cf. 5.1.1 above). This distinction plays a role in the genealogy of the Stoic notion of saying which grounds the notion of a *lekton*. But the Stoic analysis of saying also leads to a very different account of the sentence—one which distinguishes expressions in terms of whether they get a complete *lekton* said, or an incomplete *lekton* said, or neither, i.e. when an expression does not get anything said in the relevant sense of ‘said’. One of the upshots of this account is that the Stoics do not account for anything quite like the minimal components of a sentence, but rather the necessary constituents for the enunciation of a *lekton*. These necessary constituents are thus not imposed by surface grammar, (the one which governs the shortest sentence on the Platonic view). Rather, they turn on the requirements of the *katēgorēma*: what it is said of, and whether it is directly or indirectly said of it (e.g. the difference between ‘I regret’ and ‘there is regret for me’, see 8.1.3.5.1 above), and whether the *katēgorēma* itself is simple or complex (e.g. whether it has an internal complement). Before we examine these requirements further in 9.2 below, we must grasp what is at stake with the Stoics’ shift of focus away from surface grammar, on the ontological status of that which gets said. It will turn out that, as an ontological item, a *lekton* cannot be incomplete. However, in view of the relation of language to the *lekton* as both instrumental to its expression and revelatory (as a mirror of it) of its internal constitution, certain expressions express an incomplete *lekton*. This is the case—it will be argued—only because the *lekton* is complete as a thing in reality. What is more, only expressions expressing *katēgorēmata* will turn out to be expressions capable of expressing an incomplete *lekton*.

9.1.1. On the Notion of the Finished Sentence

It is easy enough to see how, on the surface, the Platonic tradition and the Stoic analysis merge. For it seems that, as far as surface grammar is concerned, they are describing the same thing. For the primary sentence in Plato coincides with the expression fit to get an *axiōma* said for the Stoics. With commentators and interpreters who overlook the deeper differences, the Stoic notions of completion, or indeed the requirements triggered by what is incomplete, transfer onto the distinctions broached by Plato as further explanations rather than rival analyses.

This kind of merger is exemplified in the reception and appropriation by the Grammarians of these surface similarities. A scholion on Dionysius Thrax represents this historiographical and hermeneutic development. The scholiast

presents the name and the verb (following the Platonic framework) as the only necessary components of a sentence; but he adds that there is a reciprocal tension between the two components. It is a tension which is explained in terms that are a direct application of a Stoic analysis, namely that each constituent of the sentence requires the other to produce a 'self-complete' (*autoteleia*) sentence:

without the name and without the verb there is no self-complete sentence³

This addition exemplifies the Stoic influence on the analysis, with the highlighted importance of the notion of completeness as the criterion for what makes a sentence. But it also marks how this Stoic notion has merged and been adapted to the commitment, derived from the Platonic and Peripatetic line, to the centrality of name and verb in the sentence.

The notion of self-completion expressed through a finished sentence is adopted by the Grammarians. Apollonius Dyscolus, as a prime example, enters into detailed discussions about the grammatical structure of sentences in terms of the right combination, 'syntax' (*suntaxis*), which 'finishes a thought'.⁴ The considerations involve the combination of different kinds of verbs (active, passive, transitive, and so on) with their appropriate kinds of subjects (including different cases required for different kinds of verbs) in order to bring about completeness, *autoteleia*. For Apollonius it is the accumulated signification of each contributor of the sentence (the verb, the noun, and the other parts of speech) which brings to completion or 'finishes' the thought. This in turn establishes the boundaries of a sentence. It is from these kinds of accounts of the sentence, developed by the Grammarians, that the *Suda* collects a number of definitions for what makes a string of words a sentence. Thus, what is called in Greek a '*kōlon*' (a clause), a '*protasis*' (a sentence) and translated in Latin as a '*sententia*' is that which presents a finished structure so as to express a complete thought. A *kōlon* (which has given us the modern punctuation mark marking the end of a clause⁵) is defined in the *Suda* as 'a line which contains a finished thought', and a *protasis* (sentence) is defined as a 'complete finished thought'.⁶ For the Grammarians, a finished sentence, or clause, is the kind of item which is

³ ΣDion. Th. 516.24–7: 'χωρὶς ὀνόματος καὶ χωρὶς ῥήματος οὐ γίνεται αὐτοτέλεια τοῦ λογοῦ'.

⁴ Ap. Dyc. *Synt.* 3.402.1–2: 'ἀπαρτίζει διάνοιαν'.

⁵ See PARKES 1992 pp.15–16 on Saint Jerome's inaugurating the practice of punctuating the Bible '*per cola et commata*'—a practice then generally adopted by scribes. See also throughout the first chapter the distinction between the Grammarians' concern to identify the boundaries of a sentence as forming a molecular thought, and rhetors whose concern is poise and effect.

⁶ *Suda*, 'κῶλον' under the letter K, entry 2244: 'ὁ ἀπηρτισμένην ἔχων ἔννοιαν στίχος' and the definition of 'προτάσις' found within the entry devoted to the *sumbama* under the letter -Σ, entry 1357: 'αὐτοτελή διάνοιαν ἀπαρτίζουσα'. The term '*sumbama*' is rare and of Stoic origin, a variant or sometime equivalent of '*katēgorēma*' (cf. D.L. 7.64, Amm. in *Int.* 44.24). The use of '*ennoia*' and '*dianoia*' is interchangeable in this context, both referring to a thought.

properly expressive of a thought. Quintilian, in this perspective, constructs a morphological scaffolding to account for the use of the term '*sententia*' for a sentence by associating it with the Latin '*sentire*' ('to perceive'): a thought is that which 'has been sensed (*sentire*) with our minds'.⁷

A finished expression is thus the expression capable of unfolding all that is contained in a single thought in our mind. It is through a correct combination of words, a correct 'syntax', that a sentence properly 'finishes', i.e. brings to completion, the expression of a thought. Stoic terminology pervades these definitions, most importantly here in the association between completed thought and finished sentence. We can recognize easily enough the collapsing of the formal requirements of expression with the unified content it conveys, which the Stoics keep distinct. The *lekton* has vanished from all considerations. In its place is a vague reference to a thought, and the syntax of sentences. This is what is left from an account in which it is the *lekton* which has a *suntaxis*, one that is meant to guarantee the unity of the *lekton* in contrast with the piecemeal construction of a sentence.

The Grammarians, in appropriating elements from the Stoic account of *lekta* to an analysis of expression and rules of correct sequencing of words, retain the lesson about minimal necessary constituents for a sentence. They retain a notion of completeness, and correspondingly a notion of incompleteness. But, as in the scholion quoted above, or in Apollonius, these notions are taken to motivate the internal dynamics of a sentence such that each necessary constituent is considered as equally deficient and incomplete without the other:

no direct case constitutes a self-complete sentence without a verb⁸

The appeal to the notion of self-completeness is a mark of the Stoic influence on this view of syntax. But the reciprocity which is suggested between verb and case is a further interpretation. Jean Lallot, in commenting on the quoted passage, speaks of a 'process of construction, which starts from the direct case'. In uttering 'this one', a speaker is bound to complete a sentence, for there is an 'inherent question' in the direct case he has expressed.⁹ Thus the necessary or 'inherent' question which characterizes the incomplete status of the *katēgorēma* in our Stoic sources (which triggers the question 'who?') is

⁷ Quint. *Inst.* 8.5.1: '*sententiam veteres quod animo sensissent vocaverunt*': 'a sentence is what the ancients used to call that which they perceived with their minds'.

⁸ See Ap. *Dysc. Synt.* 3.274.1–2: 'ὅτι οὐδεμία εὐθεία συνίσταται δίχα ῥήματος εἰς αὐτοτέλειαν'. See also, for example, Ap. *Dysc. Pron.* 69.9–10: 'αἱ τε εὐθείαι ἐν τρίτῳ προσώπῳ νοούμεναι τὰ ῥήματα εἰς αὐτὰς ἐπάγονται, Δίων περιπατεῖ, Σωκράτης διαλέγεται', 'the direct cases, considered as in the third person, draw verbs to themselves, such as with "Dion walks", or "Socrates talks"'.

⁹ See LALLOT 1997 intro. Lallot speaks of 'cases' to refer to the '*ptōseis*', or as in the Apollonius passage quoted '*eutheia ptōsis*' (direct case), which are closer to our grammatical cases than to what the Stoics have in mind in using the same term.

transposed to characterize the isolated utterance of a signifying noun or pronoun. Lallot amplifies the question which would arise from utterances such as ‘This one’ or ‘Socrates’ as: ‘what does “this one” (or “Socrates”) do?’ This reading is supported by the view in the text that an utterance is uttered in order eventually to produce a complete sentence. Apollonius in this way returns to an earlier account of the syntax of the simple or simplest of sentences in Plato’s *Sophist*, loading it with the Stoic account of incompleteness. In returning to the Platonic line, Apollonius also singles out name and verb as the only two parts of the sentence which are motivated by this reciprocal magnetic need for completion.

9.1.2. The Platonic–Peripatetic Tradition vs. the Stoics on the Parts of Speech

The distinction first set out by Plato is developed within the Peripatetic tradition in two complementary ways: on the one hand the list of elements of speech increases, on the other hand a fierce defence marks out name and verb as the only significant elements from that list. The list grows as the debates about what constitutes speech develop, fuelled also by debates between the Peripatetics and the Stoics.

Some key moments in this development are reported by Dionysius Halicarnassus in a wide-ranging treatise on literary composition. We find there a brief history of the discovery of the elements of speech as they are gradually identified. Thus, after name and verb are distinguished by Plato in the *Sophist*, Aristotle adds the connective (*sundesmos*);¹⁰ later Zeno is credited with the identification of a fourth element, the article (*arthron*);¹¹ ‘later generations’ (Dion. Hal. *Comp. Verb.* 2.10–12)—and Chrysippus in particular, if we follow Diogenes of Babylon in D.L. 7.57—add a fifth element, namely the appellative (*prosēgoria*). We have come across the appellative in the mouth of the Peripatetics (cf. 7.3 above). When the Peripatetics speak of the appellative, it is to speak of the thing itself referred to by the appellative, and not the expression (which, as we saw, is contrasted to the Stoic *katēgorēma* as two rival views of what causes are of). The Stoics, however, introduce the appellative as a grammatical term designating a kind of expression (corresponding to our noun). But the appropriation of the word by the Peripatetics shows how

¹⁰ Arist. *Int.* 5, 17a9, 17a16. See Dion. Hal. *Comp. Verb.* 2.4–7: ‘Ἀριστοτέλης καὶ οἱ κατ’ ἐκείνους φιλοσοφῆσαντες τοὺς χρόνους ἄχρι τριῶν προήγαγον, ὀνόματα καὶ ῥήματα καὶ συνδέσμους πρῶτα μέρη τῆς λέξεως ποιοῦντες’, ‘Aristotle and those who philosophized around him in his day, recognized the first three parts of speech, namely, names, verbs, and connectives’.

¹¹ Dion. Hal. *Demosth. Dict.* 48.3–5 and *Comp. Verb.* 2.8–10: Zeno is named in the first passage (perhaps merely standing in for the Stoics in general), and the Stoics in general in the second passage, who ‘separate the article from the connectives’.

soluble these technical terms very quickly became. Later, pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, participles, are added to the list, shared by later Stoics and Peripatetics alike.¹²

But if the list of elements of speech is broadly shared, the internal order of importance amongst the elements is specific to different schools of thought. There is in fact one main difference: the Peripatetic line (which develops from the Platonic original distinction) discerns an order of importance between the elements, whereas the Stoics do not.

The scholiast to Dionysius Thrax attributes to the Peripatetics the separation of name and verb from the rest on account of name and verb alone, being ‘parts of meaningful speech’ (*merē logou*) whereas the others are there ‘only for the sake of connectivity and glue (*sic*)’.¹³ In all probability this distinction can be traced back to Theophrastus, and it is held by successive generations of Aristotelians. For we know from Simplicius that Theophrastus first suggests that name and verb are ‘parts of meaningful speech’ (*logou merē*), whereas other elements of speech (articles and connectors) are said to be merely ‘parts of expression’ (*lexeōs merē*).¹⁴ The distinction is explained in terms of a distinction between significant words (*sēmantika*) which are therefore the parts of meaningful speech, and non-signifying words (*asēmoi*), grouped thus under expression, *lexis*, which in this context contrasts with *logos*.¹⁵ The Peripatetic usage, just referred to, of the appellative (a kind of

¹² The elements multiply as each new one separates from a broader class, as recounted in Dion. Hal. *Comp. Verb.* 2.12–18; see also the list in Ap. Dysc. *Synt.* 1.13–14 and Amm. *in de Int.* 12.27–15.14 on various debates about which element deserves a separate identification.

¹³ ΣDion. Th. 515.19–29: ‘ἀλλ’ ἐνεκεν συνδέσεως καὶ κόλλης παραλαμβάνεσθαι’, the glue metaphor is spun over the following lines with an image of a boat whose parts are its planks and rudder, but not the nails, which are ‘the glue’ that merely connects the parts, but themselves not a part.

¹⁴ Simpl. *in Cat.* 10.25–7: Theophrastus is reported to hold that if articles and conjunctions are to be considered as elements of speech, then the distinction between *λέξεως* and *λόγου μέρη* must be applied. Theophrastus appears to be the first to make such a distinction: see FREDE 1987b p.328f.; BARNES in *CHHP* p.209; BARNES 2007 pp.232–4. But BLANK 1996 p.140 n.68 contests the Theophrastan origin of the distinction, attributing it rather to a much later categorization by Porphyry who puts it forward as a reaction against the Stoics: for Simplicius cites Porphyry just before and just after his mentioning of Theophrastus. Blank cites Boethius *in de Int.* II, 6.15 as relying on Porphyry for the distinction between the parts of *locutio* and the parts of *interpretatio*. But presumably Boethius is merely giving a Latin equivalent to a well-established distinction, which seems to have been held throughout the Peripatetic tradition. For Simplicius mentions, in addition to Theophrastus, also ‘those who have written in his wake’; and Plutarch *Plat. Quaest.* 1010B, though he adduces his own explanation of the significance of name and verb over other words (see next note), refers to ‘those who posit these as *logou merē*’ as a familiar position in the debate.

¹⁵ See Amm. *in de Int.* 12.27–13.6: name and verb are parts of meaningful speech (*logou merē*) because they are significant (*sēmantika*), set apart from the other ‘parts of expressions’ which are non-signifying and which, by Ammonius’ time, consist of connectors, articles, prepositions, and adverbs. In support of this, Ammonius refers to Aristotle’s *Poetics* where connectors are said to be ‘non-signifying’ (presumably Arist. *Poet.* 20, 1456b38). See also Porphyry in Simpl. *in Cat.* 11.28–9 on connectors ‘which reveal nothing of being’; and Plutarch *Plat. Quaest.* 1010A

name on the lists of elements of speech¹⁶) illustrates what ‘signifying’ comes down to here. Namely that a ‘signifying element of speech’ stands for a thing: ‘indicative only and revealing of some nature, or activity’.¹⁷ The non-signifiers, in contrast, are indicative of and reveal nothing.¹⁸

The distinction, which runs through the Peripatetic tradition, is revelatory of a characteristic of the Peripatetic line which runs deep in its commitments. For the distinction between two classes of words reflects the distinction between two separate concerns: (i) the things in the world which names and verbs represent, and the relations between the things which the combination of name and verb directly reflect (whether these are Platonic Forms, or properties, or substances); (ii) the different logical tools we have at our disposal (connectives, pronouns, prepositions, etc.) to speak about these things. The distinction, in other words, is not between language and ontology, or expression and what gets expressed (which is, after all, the reserved particularity of the Stoics in these debates). Rather, as we have already seen at work for the Peripatetics, there are linguistic tools which serve as logical tools (such as predication) which are contrasted with the things (Forms, substances, properties) which stand in relations of inherence or belonging, and which the logical tools help to articulate.¹⁹

It is a view which is born out of the original Platonic distinction, as Plutarch exemplifies in a discussion (*Quaest. Plat.* 1009B–1011E) in which he retraces the various points of argument put forward in defence of this distinction. He explicitly connects it with the lines from Plato’s *Sophist* and presents the view as the explanation of why Plato individuates precisely those two items, name and verb, as the fundamental items to make up the basic sentence.

distinguishing between name and verb as ‘revealing *pragmata* (things)’ (echoing the terminology of *Sophist* 262d8) in contrast to connectors, articles, and prepositions which are but ‘empty sounds’. See WHITAKER 1996 pp.52–56 on Aristotle’s treatment of names and verbs in contrast to Plato’s definitions in the *Sophist*.

¹⁶ Dion. Hal. *Comp. Verb.* 2.11.

¹⁷ Amm. in *de Int.* 59.25: ‘ὅτι ὡς φαντικὸν μόνον καὶ δηλωτικὸν φύσεώς τινος ἢ ἐνεργείας δεῖ τὸ μέρος τοῦ λόγου θεωρεῖν’, ‘you must understand that a part of meaningful speech is only that which is expressive and revealing of some nature or activity’.

¹⁸ Amm. in *de Int.* 15.12.

¹⁹ This picture has its foundations in the passage under discussion from Plato’s *Sophist*: the joining together of verb and name is the joining together of ‘signs in the voice’ (Plato *Soph.* 262d9) which mirror the joining together of the items in reality (the *pragmata*) to which they refer. The difficulty is in identifying what the ‘things’ are: Forms, or participants in a Form; see on this correspondence theory ACKRILL 1965 and BESTOR 1980a. Aristotle’s *Categories* plays a key role in rearticulating this question and fixing, for the Peripatetic tradition, the distinction between the two questions described here, separating the identification of the things into their appropriate categories and the logical relations that govern the order of the categories; for more on this see FREDE 1987g and MANN 2000 pp.76–9 on the Aristotelian treatment of these specific difficulties in the Platonic account, and pp.135–47 on the origin of the question under what Mann designates as the question of ‘the extent of the Forms’.

In Plutarch's inquiry, devoted to the privileged role of name and verb, Plutarch makes a rapid mention of certain 'dialecticians' who call '*ptōsis*' and '*katēgorēma*' what Plutarch (with Plato and the Peripatetics) calls 'name' ('*onoma*') and 'verb' ('*rhēma*').²⁰ Plutarch's remarks are anecdotal, noting the change in terminology, mentioning also another modern coinage concerning what 'the ancients' call '*protasis*' and which 'nowadays' is called '*axiōma*'. He rehearses thus the by now familiar adage about the merely surface innovations of the Hellenistic schools.²¹ Given the pairing of the term '*ptōsis*' with the term '*katēgorēma*', it is more than probable that the dialecticians in question are Stoic. For indeed, the *ptōsis* and the *katēgorēma* are the paradigmatic constituents of an *axiōma* for the Stoics (see D.L. 7.64). By drawing such a parallelism, that is, by conflating the Stoic pair, the *ptōsis* and the *katēgorēma*, with the Platonic and Peripatetic *onoma* and *rhēma*, Plutarch exemplifies for us the kind of confluence and confusion which arise from the surface similarities between the Stoic and the Platonic–Peripatetic accounts.

Plutarch says something true about the Stoics, though he is in fact mistaken about what he thinks he is saying. For it is true that a *katēgorēma* together with a *ptōsis* constitute the necessary items to form a complete thing to say. It is also true that a *katēgorēma*, attributed to a *ptōsis*, constitutes an *axiōma*. It is also true that at least some sentences, which express complete *lekta* which are *axiōmata*, coincide with the minimal and primary *logoi* of the Platonic tradition, in which a name combines with a verb. Thus, the sentence 'Theaetetus flies' is a primary *logos*, or primary sentence, on the Platonic analysis; and on the Stoic account it expresses a simple *axiōma*, constituted by a *katēgorēma* [to fly] attributed to a direct case-*ptōsis* (an '*orthē ptōsis*', on which see more below), such that the expression 'Theaetetus flies' expresses a non-obtaining state-of-affairs according to which Theaetetus flies.

9.1.3. The Parts of Speech and *Lekta*

The brief analysis of the example suggests already that Plutarch is mistaken in thinking that a *katēgorēma* and a case-*ptōsis* are equivalents of the verb and name described by Plato. Names and verbs, for Plutarch, as for the Peripatetics, as also for the Stoics, are linguistic items, precisely, parts of speech. But being a part of speech means different things to different schools of thought. The Stoics stand out—though they are misrepresented by Plutarch—because

²⁰ Plut. *Quaest. Plat.* 1009C–D: 'τοῦτο δ' ἐξ ὀνόματος καὶ ῥήματος συνέστηκεν, ὡν τὸ μὲν πτωσὶν οἱ διαλεκτικοὶ τὸ δὲ κατηγορήμα καλοῦσιν'.

²¹ See 6.4.1 n.80 above.

they do not consider the elements of speech as directly referring to things, nor indeed to parts of *lekta*. For the Stoics circumscribe the role in a sentence of each element of speech to a specific function, which may eventually lead to the expression of one *lekton*: thus, for example, nouns signify qualities, and connectives connect the parts of speech. Crucially, there is a difference between these functions, which relate to questions concerning signifiers, and different questions about the contribution of these elements of speech to the expression of a *lekton*. This difference is the distinction which lies at the heart of the Stoic approach to dialectic, as discussed early on in these pages (2.2.1 above), between the inquiry devoted to signifiers (*sēmainonta*) and the other branch of dialectic, the inquiry devoted to things signified (*sēmainomena*). The Stoics, unlike the rival tradition described above, do not distinguish between signifying and non-signifying elements of speech, but between elements of speech and things signified. All the parts of speech belong to the signifiers and are ‘*merē logou*’, parts of meaningful speech (D.L. 7.57–8). There is a proper arrangement of the elements of speech, which is the proper arrangement fit to eventually express a *lekton*.

The difficulty of the Stoic position rests on this: the parts of speech are described as signifying things (e.g. qualities) which are not present (or not present in the way they are directly signified by words) in the *lekton*. But at the same time the correct association of the parts of speech is meant to express a *lekton*, and not the things which words signify directly. Individual words, of which there are five kinds for the Stoics (the name, the appellative, the verb, the connective, and the article²²), signify things but together express one *lekton*.

Thus a verb, as an element of speech, ‘signifies an uncombined *katēgorēma*’ (D.L. 7.58), whereas a *katēgorēma* ‘is a combined thing’ (D.L. 7.64). There is no contradiction or incompatibility here, but rather the grounds for the complexity of the Stoic account. For when it comes to actually signifying a *lekton*, the elements of speech are not taken individually but as an ordered whole, arranged according to rules of expression which are themselves fixed with respect to the expression of the *lekton*. A name signifies a quality (D.L. 7.58) to which a case-*ptōsis* stands in a certain relation, mediated through the difficult notion of a *tunchanon*. The general framework for this relation was discussed in 8.1.3 above; in the next section we shall analyse it further as a relation of particularization. The complexity of this relation is an indication that the Stoics envisage a shift from what a word signifies in itself to what that word contributes when it is correctly assembled as part of a sentence. From what has already been shown, the relation between what is

²² D.L. 7.57–8; Dion. Hal. *Comp. Verb.* 2.10–12; and drawing attention to the Stoics’ differentiation of the appellative (our common nouns) from the name (what we would call proper names), see ΣDion. Th. 214.18, 356.7–15, 517.33–6.

signified by a noun (namely a quality) and the case-*ptōsis* with its accompanying *tunchanon* is a subordinate relation to that framed by the relation of dependence of the case-*ptōsis* on the *katēgorēma*. This means that there is no syntactical reason to single out name and verb, on the Stoic account, from amongst other kinds of words. The Stoics remain committed to the net separation between the ontological item, the *lekton*, and the question of how to express it by enlisting the parts of speech.

Granted: the Stoic account has evident complications which disappear with the Platonic and Peripatetic classification of the parts of speech. The questions which are raised by the latter account are numerous, however, starting with formal difficulties, since meaning rests on formal characteristics of words, by which certain words (the names) designate agents, and others (the verbs) their action. It also follows from this that a well-matched pair of name and verb can constitute a sentence, though the syntactical combination does not mirror the actual combination of the things each word refers to, as in the case of ‘Theaetetus flies’ in which no such actual combination can be envisaged. The question regarding the Stoics is not how to simplify or reconcile them with the dominant tradition ultimately channelled by the Grammarians. It is rather what the Stoics gain by resisting the amalgamation of parts of speech with parts of *lekta*.

9.1.4. The Syntax of the *Lekton*: the Stoic Notion of Completion

When it comes to describing how language (corporeal articulate sounds) manages to express *lekta* (incorporeal nuclear items corresponding to states-of-affairs), the major distinction is between language managing to get something complete or incomplete said. To get something complete said, a speaker must utter ‘that which has a finished enunciation’ (D.L. 7.63). We have a list describing different kinds of *lekta*, which correspond to something complete said: the *axiōma*, the question, the inquiry, the command, the oath, the prayer, the hypothesis, the apostrophe, and the intriguingly named ‘almost *axiōma*’.²³ We have discussed in 6.1.2 and 6.2 above some aspects which distinguish one kind from another, and which determine the differences in corresponding utterances. These internal differences are variations on a main principle: that in uttering the appropriate expression something complete is said.

The *axiōma* is defined as:

a self-complete thing which can be stated as far as itself is concerned²⁴

²³ D.L. 7.66–8, and an alternative list in S.E. *M.* 8.70–3; and see 6.1.2 above.

²⁴ D.L. 7.65: ‘πᾶν αὐτοτελὲς ἀποφαντὸν ὅσον ἐφ’ ἑαυτῷ’.

The question:

a self-complete thing, just like the *axiōma*, but which demands an answer²⁵

Other descriptions follow which, as discussed in earlier sections, describe how, by getting the *lekton* in question said, we utter commands, make oaths, and so on. The description given of the ‘almost an *axiōma*’ or ‘similar to an *axiōma*’ is:

that whose enunciation is *axiōmatic* save for the addition of an emphatic particle or emotional tone, which makes it fall out of the category of the *axiōma*²⁶

All these kinds of *lekta* have it in common that they are self-complete. The details of their differences, pertaining to internal order, are secondary to this main characteristic. Thus S.E. summarizes the order of importance, saying that for something to be said:

it must, before anything else, be a *lekton*, then it also must be self-complete²⁷

Being self-complete is to have a corresponding finished enunciation, i.e. that all the words needed to express the *lekton* are present when one actually utters a sentence. There are elements about the enunciation, for example the emotional tone, which need a very precise correspondence when uttering the *lekton*—these are the conditions of utterance discussed earlier, in particular with reference to the question of actors (see 6.2.4 above).

The notion of self-completion has two main connotations, one which is taken up in the historiographical tradition, *via* the Grammarians, as the criterion for when to end a sentence, or indeed for what makes a sentence, a sentence: namely that which encapsulates a finished thought. Related to this, and also channelled by the Grammarians, is what counts as a necessary constituent of a sentence. We have discussed at 9.1.1 above a few elements of the historiographical tradition concerning the notion of a sentence. This constitutes the background against which to delineate the specificity of the Stoic contribution. From the lasting impact of the notion of completeness, it is in that direction of inquiry that our investigation leads us, focusing on the dynamics that govern the syntax of the *lekton*. The Stoics defend the *lekton* as a fusional compound despite the cries of ‘impossible’ from, for instance, S.E. (M. 8.79), who retorts that ‘nothing incorporeal can be compounded or divided’.

²⁵ D.L. 7.66: ‘ἐρώτημα δέ ἐστι πρᾶγμα αὐτοτελές μὲν, ὡς καὶ τὸ ἀξίωμα, αἰτητικὸν δὲ ἀποκρίσεως’.

²⁶ D.L. 7.67: ‘ὅμοιον δ’ ἐστὶν ἀξιώματι ὃ τὴν ἐκφορὰν ἔχον ἀξιοματικὴν παρὰ τινος μορίου πλεονασμὸν ἢ πάθος ἔξω πίπτει τοῦ γένους τῶν ἀξιωμάτων’. In the parallel passage in S.E. M. 8.73–4 this is called a ‘more than an *axiōma*’ (‘πλέον ἢ ἀξίωμα’).

²⁷ S.E. M. 8.74: ‘δεῖ αὐτὸ πρὸ παντὸς λεκτὸν εἶναι, εἴτα καὶ αὐτοτελές’.

9.1.5. The *Axiōmatic* Structure as Ontologically Constitutional

The finished enunciation of a *lekton* is composed of the constituents which are necessary to finish it. The lack of one or more of these constituents should make for an unfinished enunciation. An unfinished enunciation is what characterizes an incomplete thing said, and thus an incomplete *lekton*. But given what has been said about *lekta*, that they correspond to states-of-affairs and that they are grounded on a foundational relation in which something is attributed to something, it cannot be any fragmentary enunciation which expresses an incomplete *lekton*. Thus, the lack of a necessary constituent of an enunciation does not automatically imply that an incomplete *lekton* is thereby said. The absence of an element of enunciation can result in any of three outcomes: (i) what is said is nevertheless complete, though not the *lekton* meant to be expressed; or (ii) something incomplete is indeed expressed; or (iii) nothing gets said, neither complete nor incomplete, though signifying words may be uttered. There are thus three scenarios to bear in mind.

The self-complete *lekton* described above as the ‘similar to an *axiōma*’, is characterized by its including in its enunciation an emphatic or emotional particle—the presence of which is the reason why the *lekton* is not an *axiōma*, and makes it a kind of its own. The particle in question is thus a necessary constituent. An example is the expression: ‘Gosh, the Parthenon is beautiful!’, where the emphatic particle is ‘gosh’ whose contribution is also underlined by the exclamation mark in English.²⁸ But in leaving it out we do not arrive at the expression of an incomplete *lekton*. We utter ‘The Parthenon is beautiful.’ What we have thereby managed to express is an *axiōma*, not an incomplete thing said. We can try to leave out something else, e.g. what is expressed by the verbal phrase ‘is beautiful’, so that we utter ‘Gosh, the Parthenon’. The latter expression seems indeed to be unfinished; it is not a sentence. But does it get something said in the way a *lekton* is something said? And if we also leave out the emphatic part, do we get something said by uttering ‘the Parthenon’? And if we leave out this last part and keep the rest, uttering: ‘Gosh, is beautiful!’? And if we take away the emphatic part, and are left with just ‘is beautiful’? Do these last two expressions get something said?

The Stoics give a clear answer only in one case, namely for the expression ‘is beautiful’ which corresponds to the unfinished enunciation of a *katēgorēma*. An unfinished enunciation is thus unfinished only by lacking specific elements.

The pattern appears to be the following: there is a first stage at which any kind of complete *lekton* can be stripped of certain elements such that what is left is the enunciation of an *axiōma*. It follows that any complete *lekton* can be transformed in such a way as to reveal an underlying *axiōma*. After this stage

²⁸ The example is taken from D.L. 7.67: ‘καλός γ’ ὁ παρθενών’. See also S.E. M. 8.73.

there follows either a stripping of constituents which leaves an incomplete *lekton* said, or a stripping of other constituents which do not get anything said in the relevant sense. This is the case with the ‘similar to the *axiōma*’, as we have seen, just as with the enunciation of the question with its interrogative particle: ‘is it the case that it is day?’ (D.L. 7.66). Stripping the question of its interrogative particle, we are left with the enunciation of an *axiōma*: ‘it is day’. The very descriptions of these *lekta* mention the fundamental relation they have with the *axiōma*, e.g. with the question described as ‘like the *axiōma*’ (see n.25 above). The same goes for the other kinds of *lekta*.

The Stoics consider that there is an underlying *axiōma* at the heart of all complete *lekta*, which is what is left once all the characterizing elements of the enunciations necessary for the identification of the different kinds of *lekta* are left out. This is apparent from a certain number of significant testimonies. The most explicit is reported by Plutarch:

they themselves [the Stoics] say that those who utter a prohibition, say one thing, prohibit another, and command another. For example, he who says ‘Do not steal’, says precisely this: ‘do not steal’, but he prohibits stealing and commands not to steal. The law thus will not be prohibiting the foolish anything without also commanding them.²⁹

In commanding and prohibiting there is always an addressee implied such that stealing, here, is always attributed to the fools (for whom the law is made, as is emphasized in the last sentence). Thus prohibiting or commanding turn out to be functions of a core *axiōmatic* relation in which stealing is said of the fools. A prohibition consists in prefixing the relation in terms of a prohibitive ‘do not’. A command, in terms of an injunction to the fools to do something, namely not to steal.

In analysing the kinds of *lekta* as a kaleidoscopic set of functions which alter, according to distinctive modulations, the *axiōmatic* structure, we preserve both the Stoics’ commitment to the kinds of *lekta* constituting distinct items in ontology (and thus not linguistic productions), as also the unity which grounds the notion of a *lekton*. In recognizing different kinds of *lekta*, the Stoics expand the pool of configurations in which the *katēgorēma* is attributed to, or said of, something. But it is always this relation which constitutes the ontological anchor, which guarantees the nuclear relation at the heart of each and every kind of *lekton*.

We saw how opposite the true *axiōma* (in which the *katēgorēma* is truly attributed) there subsists the false *axiōma* (in which the *katēgorēma* is falsely attributed).³⁰ We now see that alongside the subsisting opposite *axiōma* there

²⁹ Plut. *Stoic. Rep.* 1037 D–E: ‘αὐτοί γε μὴν λέγουσι τοὺς ἀπαγορεύοντας ἄλλο μὲν λέγειν ἄλλο δ’ ἀπαγορεύειν ἄλλο δὲ προστάττειν· ὁ γὰρ λέγων “μὴ κλέψῃς” λέγει μὲν αὐτὸ τοῦτο “μὴ κλέψῃς”, ἀπαγορεύει δὲ <κλέπτειν, προστάττει δὲ> μὴ κλέπτειν· οὐδὲν οὖν ἀπαγορεύσει τοῖς φαύλοις ὁ νόμος, εἰ μὴ δὲ προστάξει.’

³⁰ S.E. *M.* 8.10 and see 8.1.2 n.9 above.

subsist also the other kinds of *lekta*, with the interrogative modulator, the exclamative, the prohibitive, the injunctive, and so on and so forth, which are presented as parallel functions of the core *axiōmatic* structure.³¹ The negation of an *axiōma*, not [a φ -ies], is thus one function of the *axiōmatic* structure, alongside others, e.g. (is it the case?) [a φ -ies], (do) [a φ -ies], (really?!) [a φ -ies], (I wish) [a φ -ies], and so on.

In a training exercise in rhetoric offered by Aelius Theon, an orator and teacher of rhetoric of the first century AD, one training method in particular resonates with a lingering Stoic analysis of the different forms of speech. Theon proposes to transform the propositional form ('in the assertive mode') of a line from Thucydides into a 'more than a proposition', which he does by adding emphatic particles; he then transforms the line into a question, an injunction, a hypothesis, and so on, enumerating a list of familiar forms of speech.³² There is no direct reference to the Stoics in these pages, but the ancestry of the terminology ties this testimony to a Stoic origin. More importantly, the original approach, which is not that of the Grammarians who base the distinctions on the modes of the verb, gives this text testimonial value. For the whole exercise turns on the centrality of the propositional form for all other forms of speech. The latter are shown to be variations on the proposition, arrived at through additions and transformations of the core elements of the proposition. There is thus a lasting impact of what originates with the Stoics' work on the unity and centrality of the *axiōmatic* relation.

For the Stoics the core elements are identified as the elements which guarantee the completeness of the *lekton*. Thus the descriptions of the kinds of complete *lekta* always contain at least two features: firstly, the emphasis that they are 'a complete thing (*pragma*)/or *lekton*' (*pragma* and *lekton* are interchangeable in these lists), secondly, the mention of an additional feature which distinguishes one kind from another. What they all have in common is the *axiōmatic* structure, whose constituents are the necessary constituents for something complete to be said.

The *axiōma* itself is distinguished from the other kinds by having all and only those necessary constituents, thus, alongside the confirmation that the *axiōma* is 'a self-complete thing', the descriptions give, as its discriminating

³¹ Worth mentioning in passing, though there is little we can get out of it as the text stands, are a tantalizingly corrupt few lines in Chrysippus' *Log. Inv.* PHerc. 307 col.10.8–10, in MARRONE 1997 p.93, in which the word '*pragmata*' is followed, a few word-gaps later, by an enumeration including '*euchesthai*' ('praying') and '*omnuein*' ('swearing') then gaps, then '*perieilēmmena axiōmata*' ('*axiōmata* which are contained') would seem to indicate that Chrysippus is saying that in the linguistic activities we carry out by getting *pragmata* (i.e. *lekta*) said, there are *axiōmata* contained within them.

³² Theon *Prog.* 87.23–89.30 and the introduction by PATILLON 1997 pp.lx–lxi on Theon's connections with the lists from dialecticians and Stoic influences in particular; see also SCHENKEVELD 1984.

feature that it ‘can be affirmed’ or ‘affirmed or denied’, ‘as far as itself is concerned’ (*hoson eph’ heautō*) (D.L. 7.65). As both Frede (1974 pp.34–8, whose translation for the latter expression, I take up) and Bobzien (1986, pp.12–13, 20) show, each of these features contribute to identify the particularity of the *axiōma* with regard to the other kinds of complete *lekta*. Bobzien emphasizes that this particularity consists in the *axiōma*’s not requiring anything in addition (unlike the question, requiring an answer, the command, requiring compliance, etc.). Here, what I highlight is that, in not requiring anything more, the *axiōma*, ‘as far as itself is concerned’, is itself a function of the axiomatic structure in which the propositional content is now asserted.

There are thus two kinds of necessary constituents: (i) necessary for a complete *lekton* to be said, and (ii) necessary to get a specific kind of *lekton* said. In the case of the *axiōma*, the two levels of necessity coincide, in that what is necessary to be complete is also what is necessary and sufficient to constitute the specific kind of *lekton*. The necessity in (i) is the fundamental and structural necessity by which something is attributed to something. Thus, with the case of the *axiōma*, in which the structurally necessary constituents are asserted (or denied), we see that for the Stoics the prime interest in the *axiōma* is not its role in logic and demonstrations, but rather that it mirrors precisely the basic attributive structure of ontology.

9.1.6. The Incomplete *Lekton*: Trivial or Special?

An unfinished enunciation is unfinished because it lacks a necessary constituent, necessary, that is, to get a *lekton* said. As noted at the end of the last chapter (8.2.2.3 above), in all of our more reliable texts the only example we find for an unfinished enunciation which expresses an incomplete *lekton* is the example of the expression expressing a *katēgorēma*. Thus, in uttering ‘writes’ (in the absence of any context), we get something incomplete said, because, though something necessary for completing the *lekton* is missing, something nevertheless is said—something which is not nothing at all and is more than merely naming. In contrast, when we utter ‘the Parthenon’, all we do is name something. We name a quality, which is a corporeal thing we can point to (D.L. 7.58). It thus turns out that in uttering other isolated parts of the enunciation of a *lekton* we do not thereby get an incomplete *lekton* said.

What is characteristic of the unfinished enunciation is that it forces us to ask a question about it:

for we inquire further: who?³³

³³ D.L. 7.63: ‘ἐπιζητούμεν γάρ, τίς;’

Two aspects underlie this characterization: the necessity of a question and the necessity of this specific question. Thus, firstly, the unfinished enunciation triggers a question about it. The use of ‘inquire further’ (*epizētoumen*) is not the verb used for a regular question and answer exchange.³⁴ In this context in particular it indicates that the utterance of ‘writes’ compels us to pursue the matter further and ask about it; not—as in a question and answer exchange—to get to something true or false, but first and foremost to get to something complete. Secondly, we do not just ask any question, but a specific one, about whom (or what) what has been said is said of. The question arises necessarily because the enunciation needs to be completed precisely in this way. For there are other kinds of questions, e.g. ‘how?’, ‘where?’, ‘why?’, and so on, which could be asked on hearing the word ‘writes’, but they are not necessary questions in the way the question ‘who?’ is.

The claim defended here is that the reason for this is that, if we do manage to get something, however incomplete, said by uttering ‘writes’, it is because ‘writes’ is in fact, i.e. in reality, said of something, even if speakers are ignorant of who or what this something is. That is to say that the *katēgorēma* which is thus expressed is in reality, i.e. structurally, attributed to something. It is in virtue of being attributed, i.e. said of something, that there is a *katēgorēma* there to be said in the first place. This is why there is only one question which the utterance of ‘writes’ triggers necessarily. It is the question which needs to be answered in order to fulfil the fundamental relation binding the necessary constituents of the *axiōmatic* relation. There is a degree of compulsion for completion which must be met for an unfinished enunciation to count as one.

S.E. offers, by way of contrast, a good example of a non-exacting, flimsy notion of incompleteness. In an attack on a recognizably Stoic definition of an argument as a ‘*systema*’, ‘that is to say, the thing conceived as a compound made of premisses and conclusion’,³⁵ S.E. proposes to show that by stripping away any part of what is supposed to be constitutive of the argument we end

³⁴ The Stoics use *ērōtân* for asking a question, which expects to be answered with an *‘āpōkrisis’*, see D.L.7.42: *τὴν διαλεκτικὴν τοῦ ὀρθῶς διαλέγεσθαι περὶ τῶν ἐν ἐρωτήσει καὶ ἀποκρίσει λόγων*, ‘dialectic is the science of discussing things correctly through question and answer’. Amongst the kinds of *lekta*, the question (*erōtēma*) which ‘demands an answer’ is also distinguished from the interrogation (*pūsma*) which requires an answer which is not just yes or no, as with the dialectical question (*erōtēma*). Thus there is a distinction between the kind of question and answer dynamic which grounds dialectic, and the kind of necessity which triggers the need for completion of an incomplete *lekton*.

³⁵ S.E. M. 8.385: *τὸ πᾶν σύστημα, τουτέστι τὸ ἐκ τῶν λημμάτων καὶ τῆς ἐπιφορᾶς νοούμενον, ἀπόδειξις*. See D.L. 7.45 on the use of *systema* to describe the binding principle characterizing the unit formed by the argument, as discussed in 1.3.1 above.

up with ‘something incomplete and meaningless’. Thus, if we keep only the premisses:

it is not even an argument at all, but an incomplete thing and meaningless. For no one in their right mind claims that something of this kind, taken on its own, namely, ‘if there is motion, there is void; but there is motion’ either is an argument or preserves any kind of meaning.³⁶

S.E. draws attention to his recourse to the expression ‘incomplete thing’. In such a context this cannot but have strong Stoic resonances, since S.E. is giving the Stoic account of the formal requirements of the argument. From other sources we know that an argument, according to the Stoics, is one kind of *lekton*.³⁷ It is a compounded of a major premiss (*lemma*), a minor premiss (*proslēpsis*), and a conclusion (*epiphora*).³⁸ It is hard not to think that S.E. has in mind the Stoic notion of unity, and in particular the unity characteristic of the Stoic *lekton*, since it is this unity he is attacking. He recalls earlier in the same book (M. 8.77–8) that the Stoics describe an argument as a compound of *lekta*.

Though the major and minor premisses, taken separately, coincide with distinct *axiōmata*, once they correspond to the *lemma* and *proslēpsis* of an argument they are no longer considered as independent, distinct items. The Stoics do not in any case speak of the argument as a compound of *axiōmata*, but revert to the specific designation of the constitutive parts of the argument as major and minor premisses. The point being that the parts are not detachable parts, which would function independently, i.e. get something said independently. The question then is, whether, by leaving one part out, we thereby get something incomplete said? S.E. straightforwardly concludes that we do, only that an incomplete expression is just not the thing at all. It is an ‘incomplete thing’ and therefore, ‘meaningless’. The premisses, understood as bound in a properly ‘systematic’ way, without the conclusion, are not an argument, but incomplete and meaningless. Similarly with the conclusion taken on its own (e.g. ‘therefore there is void’).

S.E. presents thus a basic, exclusivist interpretation of incompleteness: either something is the thing it is, or it is not. We emphasized ourselves at 8.2.1 above that there is a strict understanding of being said, for the Stoics, which posits that only a *lekton*, i.e. a complete *lekton*, can be properly said.

³⁶ S.E. M. 8.389–90: ‘τοῦτο γὰρ οὐδὲ λόγος ἐστὶ τὴν ἀρχήν, ἀλλὰ πράγμα ἐλλιπὲς καὶ ἀδιανόητον, εἴγε οὐθεὶς φησὶ τῶν νοῦν ἐχόντων τὸ τοιοῦτον κατ’ ἰδίαν “εἰ ἔστι κίνησις, ἔστι κενόν” ἀλλὰ μὴν ἔστι κίνησις” ἢ λόγον εἶναι ἢ διάνοιάν τινα σφίζεω’.

³⁷ See D.L. 7.63, 7.76–81.

³⁸ D.L. 7.76. It is crucial for S.E.’s argument here that major and minor premisses are undetachable one from the other. On the constitution of the argument and the necessary presence, for the Stoics, of having two premisses in the argument see FREDE 1974 pp.118–20.

S.E. is thus pressurizing the Stoics precisely on this point when he pairs ‘incomplete thing’ with ‘meaningless’. For the Stoics set apart a special understanding of incompleteness precisely for the case in which there is what S.E. is calling ‘meaning’ (which is my translation here for S.E.’s own broad ‘having *dianoia*’). The incomplete *lekton* for the Stoics is that which, when someone utters the correct expression for it, corresponds to something meaningful the person manages to get said, though it is something which requires something else to complete it.

The pairing by S.E. of ‘incomplete thing and meaningless’ is thus, from the Stoic perspective, an oxymoron. For when the Stoics use ‘incomplete’ for a *lekton*, it is precisely to capture something which gets said. The way S.E. makes use of the notion is misguided. But it also puts the Stoic theory under some pressure. For if there is the possibility that S.E. is mocking the Stoics for reserving the notion of incompleteness for an intermediary stage, it is because, as S.E. points out elsewhere,³⁹ there should not be an intermediary stage according to the Stoics’ own strict rules of systematicity and unity of the *lekton*.

The case of the argument, because it is, in appearance, a non-simple item in itself, makes things both more and less obvious. For the constituents of this non-simple *lekton* should themselves be distinct complete *lekta* taken individually. But they are not, since the premisses will have different conditions of enunciation, as also of truth and falsity, from their corresponding *axiōmata* taken individually. Thus, if we were to push further the exercise broached by S.E. and strip away more of the argument’s constitutive parts, taking away not only the conclusion but also the minor premiss, we would be left with the non-simple *axiōma*, ‘if there is motion, there is void’ (a hypothetical *axiōma*, see D.L. 7.71). We would in fact be retracing parallel steps to those we took earlier (cf. 9.1.2 above), when we proceeded to recover an *axiōma*, and then an *axiōmatic* structure, at the heart of every kind of complete *lekton*. The major premiss of an argument on its own is an *axiōma*, but on its own, it is not the major premiss of an argument. It still, however, does not make for an incomplete *lekton*. Thus, in a more precise sense than S.E.’s ‘meaningless’, the Stoics are committed to saying that the utterance of parts of a sentence

³⁹ E.g. S.E. *M.* 8.79: something cannot be both compounded and an incorporeal unit: ‘τὸ αὐτοτελὲς ἀξίωμα σύνθετον εἶναι θέλουσιν, οἷον τὸ “ἡμέρα ἔστι” σύγκειται ἔκ τε τοῦ ἡμέρα καὶ τοῦ ἔστιν. ἀσώματον δὲ οὐδὲν οὔτε συντεθῆναι οὔτε μερισθῆναι δύναται’, ‘the self-complete *axiōma*, they hold, is a compound, like “it is day” which is compounded out of “day” and “it is”. But nothing incorporeal can ever be compounded or divided’. A similar train of thought about the constitution of a demonstration: S.E. *M.* 8.77–8: ‘ἡ γὰρ ἀπόδειξις λόγος ἐστίν, ὃ δὲ λόγος ἐκ λεκτῶν συνέστηκεν. τοῖς λεκτοῖς οὖν παραστήσουσι τὸ εἶναι τι λεκτὸν οἱ Στωϊκοί, ὅπερ ἀπεμφαίνει, ἐπεὶ περὶ ὃ μὴ διδοὺς εἶναι τι λεκτὸν οὐδὲ πολλὰ δώσει λεκτὰ εἶναι’, ‘a demonstration is speech, but speech is constituted by *lekta*. The Stoics will thus be establishing the reality of *lekta* on the basis of *lekta* which is preposterous, for someone who does not concede that there is such a thing as one *lekton*, will not grant that there are many’.

does not get anything said, apart from one specific kind of utterance, revelatory of a specific part of a *lekton*, which results in the expression of an incomplete *lekton*. The unfinished enunciation of an incomplete *lekton* thus lacks something which is necessary to it, and sufficient for it, to form a complete thing to say.

9.1.7. Minimal Parts and the Invention of Syntax: the Stoic Incomplete *Lekton* vs. Frege's Unsaturated Concept

What minimally completes an incomplete *lekton*, constitutes an *axiōma*. Other additions, as we have seen, will correspond to different *lekta*, but these modulations build on a foundational *axiōmatic* structure.

The enunciation of the *katēgorēma* triggers the question 'who?' It follows that that which answers the question, together with the conjugated verb expressing the *katēgorēma*, constitute the necessary parts for a finished enunciation of an *axiōma*. The answer to the question 'who?' thus sets out the syntax, i.e. the rules for combination of the minimal necessary parts of the *axiōmatic* structure, which all *lekta* are structured around. These rules have had a lasting influence on what we think of as grammar to this day, at the expense, however, of losing early on (with its appropriation by the Grammarians) the specificity of the ontological status and complex set of relations governed by the *katēgorēma*.

That specificity came to be once again properly reinstated and in some sense reinvented,⁴⁰ on purely logical grounds, by Gottlob Frege. Frege distinguishes between a concept-term which, on its own, is 'unsaturated'. It can only be saturated by an object, from which it is distinct in every way, and on which it also utterly depends for its existence. Frege sets out a notion of unsaturatedness such that there can be no concept without the object which falls under it. The discovery, on the Fregean account, is that 'the concept... is always predicative'.⁴¹ What Frege thus lays out as fundamental for the concept-term is that its being unsaturated determines its being predicated of an object.

⁴⁰ It is highly unlikely Frege had any precise knowledge of Stoic logic, despite attempts to infer possible exchanges between Frege and Rudolf Hirzel (a scholar of the history of ancient philosophy who wrote a paper on Stoic logic in 1879 and was a lodger for some time in the same house as Frege): see on this missed encounter GABRIEL, HULSER & SCHLOTTER 2009.

⁴¹ See FREGE 1882 p.81: 'A concept is unsaturated in that it requires something to fall under it; hence it cannot exist on its own. [...] the relation of subject to predicate is not a third thing added to the two, but it belongs to the content of the predicate, which is what makes the predicate unsaturated.' Also FREGE 1892 on the distinction between object and concept. As also FREGE 1906 p.193: 'Object and concept are originally dependent on one another, and, with the first subsumed under the second, we have their original union.' See on this fundamental union BARNES 1996b p.176 with n.4.

The discovery in Frege is associated with a mathematical analysis of language in which variables of a certain kind (the object, or singular term which however need not be single, and can be plural) satisfy the gap, which must be filled, and is left open by the concept-term. Frege also envisages doubling up the levels by which the unsaturated state of the linguistic terms is mirrored by the unsaturated state of the 'senses' of the terms. He alights, in so doing, on one aspect of the Stoic analysis which resonates deeply with the twentieth-century reappraisal of the question, and he brings out at the same time, for our present purposes, the contrast in approach with the Stoics.

For what resonates with the Stoic approach is that the characteristic of incompleteness for the Stoics comes from the state of the *katēgorēma* as fundamentally attributed to something. Thus, as Frege articulates the dependence of his concept-term on the object that saturates it, the Stoics acknowledge the subsistence or obtaining of the *katēgorēma* only in virtue of its being said of something. Frege's analysis begins and centres around the logical relations of which the linguistic expression should be a perfect mirror. The unsaturated state of the concept determines the predicative nature of the concept-term. For the Stoics, the stakes are reversed: for the incompleteness only comes into play with the linguistic expression of the real relation. At the logical or ontological level the *katēgorēma* subsists only insofar as it is attributed to something, thereby constituting the structural keystones of reality. This is the relation between the *katēgorēma* and that of which it is said, which together make up the *axiōmatic* relation, which is the nuclear unit contained within each *lekton*. It is on that basis that the centrality of the *katēgorēma* is defended (from its role in causation, to its role as object of desire and impulse when it comes to action and decision about actions).

That the concept-term, as a linguistic term, has the particularity of being unsaturated is one of the greater obstacle Frege faces, namely with the famous puzzle exemplified by the sentence 'the concept horse is not a horse'.⁴² For, in relying only on linguistic differentiations, it is difficult to categorically distinguish between what can and cannot count as a concept-term. For the Stoics, however, nothing can be mistaken for a *katēgorēma* since it has exclusive characteristics drawn from its ontological status and relational role within the state-of-affairs it constitutes.⁴³ Thus, though Frege repositions the centre of gravity of the proposition on the predicative term after centuries of a logic based on a grammatical equilibrium between subject-term and predicate-term, he does not rediscover the Stoic account, which first arises from a very different viewpoint, that of a cosmos arranged according to *axiōmatic* structures

⁴² FREGE 1892 p.185.

⁴³ Hence the difficulties raised with GASKIN 1997 in 8.2.2.2 above, who projects onto the Stoics the Fregean question of interchangeability of subject-term and predicate-term.

as real and foundational items. The specificity of the Stoic approach to language is thus to have subordinated it to the structure of reality, but not as a word for word symmetrical mirroring of these structures. Rather, the sentence has its own laws, at the service of producing the right sentence fit to express a single *lekton*. The notion of syntax is thus born out of considerations of the ontological structure, and not from grammatical concerns about language. In this the Stoics stand out and give philosophical foundations to the science of grammar.

9.2. GRAMMAR ON THE STOICS' TERMS

9.2.1. The Kinds of *Axiōmata* and the Right Combination

The parts of speech are signifiers. D.L. reports a set of definitions mainly ascribed to Diogenes of Babylon:

An appellative signifies a common quality such as man, horse.

A name reveals an individuating quality such as Diogenes, Socrates.⁴⁴

As for pronouns, included in the heterogeneous class of articles:

An article is a declinable part of speech, marking distinctions of gender and number of names, such as 'the'.⁴⁵

'Declinable' (*ptōtikon*) contrasts with the indeclinable (*aptōton*) connective:

a connective is an indeclinable part of speech, which connects the parts of speech.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ D.L. 7.58: "Ἔστι δὲ προσηγορία μὲν κατὰ τὸν Διογένην μέρος λόγου σημαῖνον κοινὴν ποιότητα, οἷον Ἄνθρωπος, Ἴππος· ὄνομα δὲ ἔστι μέρος λόγου δηλοῦν ἰδίαν ποιότητα, οἷον Διογένης, Σωκράτης". BRUNSCHWIG 1995a pp.123–4 suggests that there is a subtle point conveyed in the distinction between the appellative's signifying (*sēmainon*) and the proper name's revealing (*dēloun*): 'signifying' would imply that a common quality can be defined and described by other expressions, whereas the individuating quality is revealed because only the name itself can stand for that quality; no other definition or synonym can replace it. For our present purposes, however, we need only pay heed to the referring relation (i.e. that the words indicate qualities) which both verbs guarantee—indeed since Plato's use of both in the *Sophist* in first describing the role of name and verb (*Soph.* 262a3–6).

⁴⁵ D.L. 7.58: "ἄρθρον δὲ ἔστι στοιχείον λόγου πτωτικόν, διορίζον τὰ γένη τῶν ὀνομάτων καὶ τοὺς ἀριθμούς, οἷον Ὁ, Ἡ, Τό, Οἱ, Αἱ, Τά" (the list of examples corresponds to the masculine/feminine/neuter, singular and plural of the article in Greek).

⁴⁶ D.L. 7.58: "σύνδεσμος δὲ ἔστι μέρος λόγου ἄπτωτον, συνδοῦν τὰ μέρη τοῦ λόγου".

And the fifth part of speech is the verb:

A verb is a part of speech signifying an uncombined *katēgorēma*, according to Diogenes of Babylon, or, according to some others, an indeclinable part of speech signifying something combined to some thing or things, such as ‘I write’, ‘I say’.⁴⁷

We need go no further in refining these definitions, for the main point for now is clear, namely that no part of speech signifies a case-*ptōsis*; but that one part of speech, the verb, has a complicated signifying relation to the *katēgorēma*, since it signifies an uncombined *katēgorēma*, but therefore not a *katēgorēma*.

And yet it is the case-*ptōsis* and the *katēgorēma* which are present within a *lekton*. Thus, when it comes to analysing the constituents and internal structure of *axiōmata*, there is a ‘combination’ (*sunestos*’, as in D.L. 7.70) say the Stoics. Our sources report three main kinds of combinations: (i) a first combination of ‘a direct case-*ptōsis* and a *katēgorēma*’, e.g. [Dion walks], which in D.L. 7.70 is called a categorial *axiōma* (*katēgorikon*), and which S.E. (*M.* 8.96–7) refers to as an ‘intermediate’ (*meson*) *axiōma*, with similar examples, [Dion walks], [man sits] ([*anthrōpos kathētai*], without the article⁴⁸). It is intermediate, according to the Sextan distinctions, for it stands in between an indefinite and a definite *axiōma*, which—some shift in terminology notwithstanding—are the kinds reported by D.L. as well. Thus a second combination, (ii), is that of ‘an indefinite part (*aoriston morion*) or parts (*aorista moiria*) and a *katēgorēma*’ which D.L. and S.E. call an indefinite *axiōma* (*aoriston*), which both sources exemplify with [Someone sits] and, in addition in D.L., with [that one (*ekeinos*) is moving]. A third combination, (iii), is that of ‘a direct demonstrative case-*ptōsis* and a *katēgorēma*’, which D.L. calls a *katagoreutikon axiōma* (‘definitive’) and S.E. calls ‘definite’ (*hōrismenon*), exemplified in both sources by [This one (*houtos*) walks]. It is D.L. 7.70 who reports in detail the syntactic constituents, indicating thus the presence of the *katēgorēma* and the case-*ptōsis* in its different guises.⁴⁹ S.E.’s report does not mention the constituents of the *lekta* but focuses on comparing the scope and truth-conditions of the different *axiōmata*.⁵⁰ It is first and foremost the internal syntax of the *lekton* that interests us here.

⁴⁷ D.L. 7.58: ῥῆμα δέ ἐστι μέρος λόγου σημαῖνον ἀσύνθετον κατηγορήμα, ὡς ὁ Διογένης, ἢ, ὡς τινες, στοιχείον λόγου ἁπλωτον, σημαῖνόν τι συντακτὸν περὶ τινος ἢ τινῶν, οἷον Γράφω, Λέγω’. We focus especially on the verb in 9.2.10 below.

⁴⁸ On the individualizing role of the definite article, and thus the noted difference with the absence of article for the Stoics, see BRUNSCHWIG 1995a, on which see n.55 below.

⁴⁹ Thus D.L. 7.70: ‘κατηγορικὸν δέ ἐστι τὸ συνεστὸς ἐκ πτώσεως ὀρθῆς καὶ κατηγορήματος, οἷον “Δίων περιπατεῖ”. καταγορευτικὸν δέ ἐστι τὸ συνεστὸς ἐκ πτώσεως ὀρθῆς δεικτικῆς καὶ κατηγορήματος, οἷον “οὗτος περιπατεῖ”. ἀόριστον δέ ἐστι τὸ συνεστὸς ἐξ ἀορίστου μορίου ἢ ἀορίστων μορίων <καὶ κατηγορήματος>, οἷον “τίς περιπατεῖ”, “ἐκεῖνος κινεῖται”.’

⁵⁰ See FREDE 1974 p.51–69, and GOULET 2007, on the truth conditions governing the different kinds of *axiōmata*, with discussions of the parallel but not quite identical accounts of D.L. 69–70 and S.E. *M.* 8.97–8. See FREDE 1974 69–73 in particular on the three negative kinds of *axiōmata*,

The constant in all combinations is the *katēgorēma*. There is, however, a variation on the item the *katēgorēma* can be combined with: the direct case-*ptōsis* is cited, which is in line with one of the descriptions of the *katēgorēma* we mentioned earlier (from D.L. 7.64, see 8.2.1 with n.43 above), in which the *katēgorēma* is that which, combined with a direct case-*ptōsis*, constitutes an *axiōma*. But given the variations in combination which make up kinds of *axiōmata*, the direct case-*ptōsis* is not itself specifically the necessary and only element to make up an *axiōma*, in the way the *katēgorēma* is necessary. For one, alongside the direct case-*ptōsis* there is also the direct demonstrative case-*ptōsis*; there are thus at least two kinds of case-*ptōseis*.⁵¹ There is in addition the indefinite part which contributes to the formation of the indefinite *axiōma*, which is not associated to a case-*ptōsis*.⁵² Thus, firstly, the case-*ptōsis* is not a specifically necessary item to make up a *lekton*, though there always is an additional item which is necessarily present alongside the *katēgorēma* in order to make up a complete *lekton*. Secondly, the case-*ptōsis* is a part of an *axiōma* only in *axiōmata* which are not indefinite.

In discussing the intermediary nature of the ‘intermediary’ *axiōma* (which D.L. calls categorical, containing a direct case-*ptōsis*, expressed by ‘Dion walks’), S.E. (at *M.* 8.97) explains that they are not indefinite because they ‘indicate the species’,⁵³ and they are not definite ‘because they are not enunciated demonstratively’.⁵⁴ Thus all *axiōmata* which are not indefinite indicate the species. All *axiōmata* which are not indefinite (namely the intermediary and the definite *axiōmata*) are constituted by similar components: a direct case-*ptōsis* and a *katēgorēma*. Thus, in uttering ‘Dion walks’, as also in uttering ‘This one walks’, two different *lekta* get said in which there is, in each case, a case-*ptōsis* whose distinctive contribution is to indicate the species. What the intermediary *axiōma* lacks with respect to the definite *axiōma* is being demonstrative. The difference therefore between the two kinds is a difference in degree of determinacy—a demonstrative being properly determinate.

9.2.2. The External Object

If we return for a moment to the parts of speech, we notice that only the *katēgorēma* figures also in relation to the parts of speech. There is a certain

which are shown to be derivative on the three main, positive, kinds. In line with BRUNSWIG 1995b, we shall consider the presentation in D.L. as aiming at an exhaustive list of the kinds of simple propositions.

⁵¹ The deictic direct case-*ptōsis* is a kind of *ptōsis*, but the two are mutually exclusive: see FREDE 1974 pp.68–9, GOULET 2007 p.195, BRUNSWIG 1995b p.157.

⁵² See CRIVELLI 1994a p.189 observing that neither negative nor indefinite parts of a *lekton* are case-*ptōseis*.

⁵³ S.E. *M.* 8.97: ‘ἀφώρικε γὰρ τὸ εἶδος’.

⁵⁴ S.E. *M.* 8.97: ‘οὐ γὰρ μετὰ δειξέως ἐκφέρεται’.

linguistic correspondence between the *katēgorēma* and the verb. But none of the items that combine with the *katēgorēma* appear as that which a part of speech signifies. In particular, none of the things which the parts of speech (other than the verb) signify, neither the common nor the individual qualities, appear to have any correspondence with the content of a *lekton*. Something mysterious seems to happen between the utterance of the name 'Dion', which signifies a quality, and the utterance of the sentence 'Dion walks' by which a *lekton* gets said, which is constituted by a *katēgorēma* and a case-*ptōsis*. No mention of the quality the word 'Dion' signifies. And where does the case-*ptōsis* come from?

The signifying word and the quality it signifies are both corporeal items (see 5.1.3.3 above). The case-*ptōsis* belongs to an incorporeal *lekton*. Another thing that has been mentioned by S.E. is the species (*eidos*), which for the Stoics is a mental concept, which is a not-something (see 3.2.4 above). Two additional elements must be recalled and brought back into the picture, since they belong to the same constellation, namely the case-bearer (the *tunchanon*) and the external object, or the thing itself, which we distinguished from the case-bearer (see 8.1.3.2 above).

From one perspective, the external object possesses qualities in virtue of which it can be said to be qualified in one way or another, but it is not itself identical with those qualities. For there is a difference between the body and its quality or qualities. Thus the quality of being Socrates, for example, which the name 'Socrates' signifies, is distinct from the body, the man Socrates, which possesses that quality.⁵⁵

From another perspective, the external object stands in the following relation to an *axiōma*: it is that with respect of which a *katēgorēma* obtains, paradigmatically as the passive body in a causal relation. Derivative on the causal relation, and thus expanding the pool of *axiōmata* (to not only those which have been caused), a *katēgorēma* obtains or subsists with respect to an external object. This relation is articulated in terms of a *katēgorēma* being said

⁵⁵ This is the Stoic answer to the Growing Argument, namely that the individuating quality is the quality which guarantees identity through time and alterations of the living thing through increase and decrease: see Simpl. *in de An.* 217.36–218.2; Chrysippus cited by Philo *Aet. Mund.* 48.1–49.6. On this see further SEDLEY 1982b pp.261–4 who puts the onus of uniquely individualizing qualities on the possibility of infallible perception, and thus the defence of *kataleptic* impressions; and see BRUNSCHWIG 1995a pp.136–9 who re-articulates the question on the basis of the presence or absence of the article accompanying both name and appellative; he shows that, according to the Stoic analysis, when the article accompanies a name (e.g. in '*ho Sōkratēs peripatei*'), the article, as indeterminate, designates the 'material substrate', and the name, the quality the substrate receives. A sentence, then, in which a name or appellative is accompanied by the article, does not express a simple *axiōma*, and probably is not an *axiōma* at all, since it fits none of the kinds distinguished (cf. also in this regard BRUNSCHWIG 1995b p.152). All the sentences we have been considering have indeed been sentences without articles in front of names or nouns.

of (paradigmatically) a case-*ptōsis*, which thus has a two-removed relation to the external thing, since its first dependence is on the *katēgorēma*. The Stoics also, as we have seen, insert the *tunchanon*, the case-bearer, into the picture, which thus mediates between the case-*ptōsis* and the thing itself. The advantage of having the *tunchanon* is that, if the *katēgorēma* is falsely attributed to the case-*ptōsis*, there is a case-bearer there with respect of which the *katēgorēma* subsists, though the *axiōma* it constitutes is false and the corresponding state-of-affairs subsists but is not actual.

The *tunchanon*, the case-bearer, is a counterpart of the case-*ptōsis* such that its status is dependent on that of the *axiōma*, and what is more on the kind of relation the *katēgorēma* has to its case-*ptōsis*. But at the same time the *tunchanon* sets out certain conditions that an external object meets when the *katēgorēma* obtains with respect to it. For what it is to be a thing in the world is to be part of the ontological structure constituted by states-of-affairs in which each constituent enters or can enter. The state-of-affairs subsists, and sometimes obtains when the *katēgorēma* that constitutes it obtains with respect to something. Accordingly, each thing in reality is associated to many *tunchanonta*, related to case-*ptōseis* of which a *katēgorēma* is truly attributed, and also falsely attributed. The association of the thing and the *tunchanon* is different depending on the true or false attribution of the *katēgorēma*. That is what it is to say that *lekta* are there present in reality, subsisting, ready to be actualized, and also ready to be said. On the one hand, the thing itself, a table or the man Dion, is that thing whether or not we say anything about it. But on the other hand, as far as their place in the cosmic *systema* is concerned, the table or the man Dion are associated to a great number of *lekta*. First and foremost, they are associated to all those which are true, by meeting the conditions set by the *tunchanon* (the case-bearer of the case-*ptōsis* of which a *katēgorēma* is truly attributed). Secondly, they are associated to the opposites of all the true *axiōmata* in not satisfying the conditions set out by the *tunchanon*. Thirdly, they are associated to all the other kinds of *lekta*, which, as we saw in 9.1.4 above, are further functions of the *axiōmatic* core structure.

In the case of a true *axiōma*, which corresponds to a *katēgorēma* obtaining with respect to an external thing, there is a coincidence between the *katēgorēma*'s obtaining with respect to the external thing and the external thing's meeting the conditions set out by the *tunchanon*, the case-bearer—conditions imposed by the *katēgorēma*'s being attributed to or said of the case-*ptōsis*. This is how it should be: for the *tunchanon* depends on the case-*ptōsis* which depends on the *katēgorēma*, whose status turns on the relation of the *katēgorēma* to the external thing. But when the *axiōma* is false, the coincidence breaks apart. There still subsists an *axiōma*, but the external object might or might not be there, and in any case, the *tunchanon* is distinct from it. It thus appears that with the relation between the case-*ptōsis* and the case-bearer, the Stoics

are offering a solution to the question of how we can say false things—the question which first prompted the primordial syntactical distinction between name and verb in Plato's *Sophist*.⁵⁶ For the Stoics, getting false things said is getting subsisting *axiōmata* said.

9.2.3. The Case-*ptōsis* and its Counterpart, the *Tunchanon*

When a *katēgorēma* is falsely attributed to a case-*ptōsis*, this has something to do with the relation of the *katēgorēma* to the external thing. But it does not free the *katēgorēma* from its fundamentally relational nature, for that is how it obtains or subsists. Thus the *katēgorēma* and the case-*ptōsis* constitute an *axiōma* also in the case in which, say, it is not the case that Dion walks. The case-*ptōsis* is now that of which the *katēgorēma* is falsely said. The case-*ptōsis* itself is related to its case-bearer. Only in the case of a false attribution is the relation of the case-bearer to the external thing such that the external thing is in some way associated to the case-bearer, but does not coincide with it. [Dion walks] is true when Dion is walking; the man Dion satisfies the conditions of the *tunchanon* which are to be Dion and to be walking. When [Dion walks] is false, the conditions of the *tunchanon* are not fulfilled, for if there is something which is Dion, it is not walking.

As far as the case-*ptōsis* is concerned, its function is purely syntactical. At the level of the *lekton*, it is what the *katēgorēma* is said of, truly or falsely. As for the external object, it remains the object it is, qualified as it is. As such, each qualified object has a name and can be named in virtue of its qualities. That is the role of specific parts of speech, namely names and appellatives (what we usually call proper names and nouns), which signify the qualities of bodies. It turns out that a body is never actually named but through the naming of its identifying qualities. Thus 'Dion' does not name Dion, but an individuating quality of Dion; similarly, 'man' names a characterizing feature of Dion. But what is it to be Dion? This is one of the conditions which the man Dion must meet, as it is set out through the *tunchanon*, the counterpart of the case-*ptōsis*, in, say, the *axiōma* [Dion walks]. Being Dion is the individuating quality which is found in the man Dion. The *tunchanon*, in its function as case-bearer, thus stands for the quality of the external thing with respect to which the *katēgorēma* obtains or subsists—that is to say, it stands for the quality insofar as the *katēgorēma* is said of it.

The association of the external thing with the case-*ptōsis* is thus an indirect tie, mediated by the *tunchanon*. But this also means that the external thing is

⁵⁶ Plato *Soph.* 261c6–8: 'Let us take up speech and belief [...] so that we can give a clearer account of how that which is not comes into contact with them.' And see DENYER 1991 pp.146–50.

associated with the case-*ptōsis* only insofar as a *katēgorēma* is said of it. At the same time, the external thing is only named through its qualities. Thus, a name or an appellative is associated only indirectly with a case-*ptōsis* via the *katēgorēma*: for only insofar as a *katēgorēma* is said of the case-*ptōsis*, such that there is then a *tunchanon*, is the signified quality and the case-*ptōsis* put in relation. For the *tunchanon*, as case-bearer (and counterpart of the case-*ptōsis*), sets out as one condition to meet, for the external body, that is has that quality. The *tunchanon*, then, can and cannot coincide with an external thing depending on the true or false attribution of the *katēgorēma*. The upshot is that a case-*ptōsis* is indirectly associated with both name and external thing, only, that is, in virtue of a first fundamental combination with a *katēgorēma*. The *tunchanon* itself accompanies the attribution of a *katēgorēma*. As such, there is no case-*ptōsis* outside of a complete *lekton*, that is to say, there is no case-*ptōsis* separate from a *katēgorēma*. For no utterance gets just a case-*ptōsis* said.⁵⁷ It thus cannot be that a case-*ptōsis* is an additional kind of incomplete *lekton* alongside the *katēgorēma*. For it is entirely governed by the requirements of the *katēgorēma*. It has no status separately from it.

What a name or appellative signifies cannot possibly be the constituent of a *lekton*, since a *lekton* is incorporeal, and what is more, a unified incorporeal item. The qualities signified by names are corporeal and therefore cannot be a part of a tight-knit incorporeal unit. Yet there must be some relation between what names or appellatives signify, uttered individually, and what they contribute to the signification of the sentence of which they are parts, and which, as a whole sentence, expresses a *lekton*. After all it is something to do with what 'Dion' and 'horse' signify, when they are uttered individually (and which an English speaker recognizes) that enables a person not only to understand the sentences 'Dion walks' and 'horse flies', but also to judge the first as true and the second as false.

It appears from what has already been advanced that for the Stoics the answer must lie with the relation between the case-*ptōsis* with the *katēgorēma* and the *tunchanon*. The unit constituted by the case-*ptōsis* and the *katēgorēma* is an incorporeal item, but what is a *tunchanon*? From what we have already seen, it is the sort of thing which can coincide with a body when that body meets the conditions the case-bearer stands for, so is the case-bearer a body? But it is also the sort of thing which remains the counterpart of the *lekton* when the *lekton* is false. Is it then incorporeal? We have discussed (8.1.3.2 above) S.E.'s awkward characterization of the *tunchanon*, at M. 8.12, which ultimately indicates only one thing for certain, that the *tunchanon* is distinct from the *lekton*. The *lekton*, in this context, is the only incorporeal item. In line with the fundamentals of Stoic ontological

⁵⁷ In flat disagreement with Gaskin 1997 pp.94–5; see 8.2.2.2 above.

analysis, there is indeed no place for case-bearers among the incorporeals. In another passage from S.E., too cursory but nevertheless precious, mentioned above (from *M.* 8.97), we learn that all *axiōmata* which contain a case-*ptōsis* are ‘indicative of the species’. The indication would seem rather general if it were not for another passage, also briefly alluded to earlier, reported by Stobaeus:

we participate in the concepts, whereas we bear the cases-*ptōseis*, which they, in fact, call ‘appellatives’⁵⁸

The report brings together all the key terms of our present discussion and puts into focus, in particular, S.E.’s mention of ‘species’. A species for the Stoics is a concept, an *ennoēma*, which is a mental construct.⁵⁹ We have concepts of what we have experienced: thus, in a passage previously discussed from the *Placita* ascribed to Ps-Plutarch, after experiencing a number of white things, we store in our minds the concept of white. But we have also concepts gained through learning, so for instance by learning the proof for the existence of void, we gain a concept of void.⁶⁰ We thus have concepts of things which are not only corporeal. However, the concepts we gain through experience are concepts of perceptible bodies, namely those which have impressed us. These corporeal entities are qualities: white, human being, or Dion. The impressions they have caused to arise in us are stored and ordered according to similarities between repeated experiences. This process of ordering forms conceptions (*ennoiai*) which are a kind of impression, distinguished by their generic content, which are the concepts: the products of our mental storage, which, through that process, have acquired a generic character.⁶¹ And this is why the Stoics say that concepts are genera and species, since they are the result of a certain ordering (the more accurate it is, the closer a person is to wisdom), by which the qualities perceived are arranged from most to least generic. And this is why, moreover, for the Stoics, the most specific of species is an individual quality.

9.2.4. Bearing the Case-*ptōsis* and Constructing the Concept

It is a relation to qualities which seems to connect all the items mentioned in the passage from Stobaeus (n.58 above). The line comes immediately after a

⁵⁸ Stob. *Ecl.* 1.12.3.9–11: ‘τῶν μὲν ἐννοημάτων μετέχειν ἡμᾶς, τῶν δὲ πτώσεων, ὡς δὴ προσηγορίας καλοῦσι, τυγχάνειν’, briefly discussed at 8.1.3.2 with n.24 above.

⁵⁹ See D.L. 7.60–1; S.E. *PH* 2.219; Stob. *Ecl.* 1.50.30; Syrianus in *Met.* 105.28–9. On concepts see 3.2.4 above.

⁶⁰ See Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B and 4.1 above.

⁶¹ The *Placita* 900B passage describes conceptions as accumulations of impressions retained by the soul through memory. See also Plut. *Comm. Not.* 1084F on conceptions as ‘a kind of impression’. Whereas conceptions are, like all impressions, corporeal states of the mind, concepts, which are their content, are not-somethings. See further SEDLEY 1985 pp.88–9 and CASTON 1999 p.173.

report on the Stoic view about Platonic Forms, namely that, for the Stoics, the Platonic Forms ‘fall under concepts’.⁶² This in part helps us understand the contrived terminology of the first half of the sentence: ‘we participate in concepts’. For the Stoics are shown to reverse the direction of the relation which is familiar from Platonic contexts, namely the relation of participation. There are no other known passages which appeal to the relation of participation in a Stoic context of discussion. It is probable, therefore, that the use here is not a Stoic use, but rather a Stoic correction in a debate with the Platonists. What it comes down to is not anything particularly technical, but rather concludes the argument for the reduction of the Forms to mental concepts by further describing what it is to have mental concepts. It consists in our mental activity of registering and storing concepts in our minds, as described in the *Placita* passage (900B–C). We participate in this activity all our waking hours. We thus order in our minds, in genera and species, the qualities of which we receive impressions.

The second half of the sentence is set out in contrast to this. No more re-appropriated terminology here, but an opaque sequence involving us ‘bearing case-*ptōseis*’, and the mention of appellatives. It is somewhat less opaque once we recognize the role of the *tunchanon* as case-bearer, and especially once we see the connection with the first half of the sentence. For the passage relies on a contrast between two attitudes to things which are somehow related, otherwise the contrast would be empty and nonsensical (like saying ‘we sweep the floor, but we sing in the shower’). The contrast is only striking when both clauses belong to the same context, (like ‘we sweep the floor, but we polish the silverware’). In this light there is something which binds concepts, case-*ptōseis*, and appellatives. What binds them is that they all have something to do with qualities. The doxographer need not say as much, since he is directly using terms which imply the relations each kind of thing has to qualities. A concept (of man, horse, animal, which are the examples in the text) is a concept of that which an appellative signifies, namely man, horse, etc. (as we know from D.L. 7.58, with similar examples as in Stobaeus). True enough, Stobaeus says the Stoics call the case-*ptōsis* an appellative, and thus overrides the Stoics’ distinction between expressions and what is signified. The misrepresentation seems especially to call in doubt our previous claims that a case-*ptōsis* is never picked out on its own by a single word. For Stobaeus’ shortcut seems to imply that for the Stoics an appellative stands for a case-*ptōsis* (and vice versa). But the misrepresentation is not quite as distorting as it seems. It attests to a better informed source than, for instance, Plutarch in his *Platonic Question* on name and verb (*Quaest. Plat.* 1009C–D, mentioned above) who says the Stoics call the name ‘*ptōsis*’.

⁶² Stob. *Ecl.* 1.12.3.5: ‘τὸν γὰρ κατὰ τὰ ἐννόματα ὑποπιπτόντων εἶναι τὰς ἰδέας’.

Firstly, Stobaeus reports not only Stoic terminology, but a Stoic context of discussion: associating the appellative with the case-*ptōsis* indicates that the background drawn on for this information is a discussion of the relation of parts of speech to parts of what gets expressed. It is his source, or Stobaeus himself, who then collapses one part (the expression) on the other (its correlate, the case-*ptōsis*) just as most of the reception and appropriation of the Stoic theory has done from early on, as we saw with some examples from the Grammarians. Secondly, Stobaeus does not in fact imply that an appellative is interchangeable with a case-*ptōsis*. What he says is that the case-*ptōsis* which we bear is equivalent to an appellative. What he reveals thereby, though all we have is a syncopated summary, is that what the appellative signifies is covered by, not the case-*ptōsis* on its own, but by the case-*ptōsis* when it is borne by us. This is the case when the *tunchanon* coincides with a body, namely us, when something true is said—the true thing said concerns us in this case: e.g. that each one of us (author and reader) is a human being.

We bear the case-*ptōsis*, in contrast to actively participating in registering and storing concepts, in that we bear the attribution of being a human being, since it is the case that we are human beings, but it is up to us to construct, each for himself (from personal experiences), the concept of human being. Thus on the one hand we coincide with the case-bearer, and we bear the case-*ptōsis* of which a true attribution has been made, namely that being a human being obtains with respect to us. We do not do anything in particular to achieve this, but rather, in being the thing that we are (i.e. having the quality of being a human being) we are those constituents of the cosmos, who enter true states-of-affairs according to which we are human. By existing as the things we are, we bear a number of case-*ptōseis*, insofar as there are true attributions made of these case-*ptōseis*, whose *tunchanonta* set out the conditions for the external object to meet. In our example, of being human, but the same goes for each and every corporeal entity in the cosmos, each made up of some quality or qualities. Thus a stone too bears a case-*ptōsis* of which, for instance, being impervious is attributed.

However, in contrast to stones, it is up to us—and it is something only rational beings do (and which they in fact cannot help but do, since this is what it is to be rational)—to actively build concepts in our minds of those things that we bear.

From the perspective of the critical dialogue with Plato, the passage from Stobaeus reveals further the process of redistribution of the roles played by Platonic Forms: as concepts, for genera and species, as *lekta* for the content of our thoughts and what is taught and learnt (see 3.3 above), and as that which things bear by way of a *katēgorēma* obtaining and being thus truly attributed to a case-*ptōsis*.

The passage from Stobaeus thus corroborates the view that when a *lekton* obtains and is constituted by a case-*ptōsis* (i.e. any kind of *axiōma* from

intermediary to definite), the *tunchanon* coincides with the external body. We can then say, with the doxographer, that it is us, or more generally, the external thing, which is the case-bearer. This leaves out *axiōmata* which are false, as also *axiōmata* which pertain to things which are not bodies—what do the Stoics say about the *axiōma* [a *lekton* is an incorporeal]?

9.2.5. The *Tunchanon*'s Double Requirement

With so few texts at our disposal, things are difficult, but not entirely hopeless. True enough, on the one hand, the Stoics are generally more interested in states-of-affairs which underlie events than in accounts of essences, which is why the heart of their ontological analysis lies in causation, in which they frame the proof of the reality of *lekta*.⁶³ They are, it would follow, less interested in analysing statements of the kind [a *lekton* is an incorporeal] and generally in meta-theoretical statements. However, it is also clear that the Stoic analysis of *axiōmata* is not reduced to *axiōmata* pertaining to causal processes—if this were the case, their whole logic would be, at the very least, weak if not useless. There are enough elements to save the account from such an outcome. But it is worth mentioning in passing that the reputation of mono-focal materialism, of a philosophy which considers only material bodies as existent and thus one which caters only for material bodies, which the Stoics earned early on in the history of their reception, is fueled by the absence of sufficiently detailed accounts of the analysis of the relation between the constituents of *lekta* and the things external to the *lekton*.

The complexity resides in this: namely that the logical analysis of a simple *axiōma*, by which its truth-conditions can be determined, is not simple. And this can be seen from the double requirement set out by the *tunchanon*. For the *tunchanon* is the case-bearer of a case-*ptōsis* only insofar as the case-*ptōsis* relates to the *katēgorēma*. The *tunchanon* thus unfolds a double relation and requires verification on two interrelated fronts: the conditions set out by the case-*ptōsis* and those of the *katēgorēma* with respect to the case-*ptōsis*. There is thus a contrast between the ontological simplicity of the simple *axiōma*, which is an ontologically unified item constituted by a case-*ptōsis* utterly dependent on a *katēgorēma*, and the logical complexity that underlies it.

We discussed in the previous chapter (8.1.3.3 above) the question of contradictories, referring to a discussion in Alexander about the proper place of the negation. The upshot there is that the negation of an *axiōma* must be placed over the whole *axiōma*, and not merely as a negation of the *katēgorēma*, lest we end up with two equally false *axiōmata* instead of a pair of

⁶³ See 7.3 above in particular on the contrast between the Peripatetics' focus on entities and the Stoic interest in processes.

contradictories: for in saying that 'Dion walks' or that 'Dion does not walk' we imply—so goes the logical analysis—that there is, on each version, a man named Dion (i.e. who has the quality of being Dion), with respect of whom walking obtains, or not. More precisely, the Stoic analysis of 'Dion walks' is articulated in the following terms: there is something (*ti*) which is Dion and that thing walks.⁶⁴ It is not by chance that we find here the two fronts which it is the *tunchanon*'s role to uphold as the counterpart of its corresponding *axiōma*, namely that first, there is something which is F, and secondly, that F φ -ies.

In a passage relating a similar formulation, S.E. (*M.* 11.8) says that the analysis corresponds to how the 'logicians' (recognizably the Stoics here) treat generic terms: thus, 'man is a rational mortal animal' is properly analysed as: 'if there is a thing (*ti*) which is a man, then that thing is a rational mortal animal'. S.E.'s formulation differs in one crucial point from the analysis reported by Alexander in that S.E. expresses the analysis in terms of a conditional of the form 'if... then'. S.E. does not emphasize any particular controversial or contradictory ways of understanding this implicative formulation. We need not ourselves, here, delve deeper into the dynamics between the antecedent clause and its consequent, but rely on S.E.'s own general definition of a conditional, 'all dialecticians agree on': namely that the validity of a conditional rests on 'the consequent following from the antecedent'.⁶⁵ For what is important in this conversion of a definition of a universal, is that it ties down talk of generic items to particulars.

From one point of view we can see this treatment of the universal as retracing the steps, backwards, of the Stoic account of the formation of genera and species (which is what the Stoics say universals are). For it is from the individual encounters with things (through the impressions each, individually, makes on us), together with the memory-traces they leave in us, which the Stoics call '*empeiria*', rationalized experience, that we produce generic conceptions and thereby form generic concepts.⁶⁶ It is thus in virtue of there being one thing which is a mortal rational animal, and another and another, and so on, that we form and consolidate the mental concept of human being. There are thus many things which display similar qualities (being mortal, being rational, being biped, etc.) but no thing in reality is a generic man (hence the Stoics appositely call this a not-something). With the analysis, reported by S.E., of the definition of man, the stages of concept-formation are re-identified in reverse order: for we see that a generic term for which we have a mental

⁶⁴ See Alex. in *An. Pr.* 402.17–33 and see also S.E. 11.8.

⁶⁵ See S.E. *M.* 8.112. For the disagreements which are immediately sparked off by this general definition (some reported in S.E. *M.* 8.112–17) and the specificity of the Chrysippean position, see FREDE 1974 pp.80–93.

⁶⁶ Ps-Plut. *Plac.* 900B, as recalled in n.60 above.

concept, like man, is analysed, at the logical level, through a mechanism of particularization, from the generic concept to the reality of a something (i.e. a particular thing), which then possesses the qualities (like rational, mortal, etc.), which had been the first features to strike us, long ago, when we first developed our concept of man. The direction of the conditional in S.E.'s text, in that first there must be something, and then that this something must be a mortal rational man, brings out the ties of inter-dependence between the case-*ptōsis* and the *katēgorēma* in the nuclear unit which makes up the *lekton*. That is to say that [walks] (say) subsists in virtue of there being a particular thing there for walks to be said of it. But at the same time this particular thing is entirely determined by its being the thing which walks (whether this is true or not). When there is no thing there, then, in fact, the *axiōma* itself is not real anymore, as we shall see in the following section.

This mechanism of particularization is the role that the case-*ptōsis* and the case-bearer divide between themselves, first and foremost to particularize or individuate one case of the generic item. A generic item is anything we have a concept of, from most generic to most specific: human being, table, or Dion. That is, after all, what S.E. at *M.* 8.97 is saying about *axiōmata* which contain a case-*ptōsis*: the case-*ptōsis* in an *axiōma* which indicates the species. This comes down to positing the reality of thing (a *ti*) which accepts of such and such attribution. It is the particular thing of which a *katēgorēma* is said. As the case-bearer, it falls on the *tunchanon* to individuate the particular thing, (*ti*) (which can be a corporeal or an incorporeal) which meets, or not, the attributions articulated within the *axiōma*. The first condition set out by the *tunchanon* is thus not the reality of any kind of thing, but of a thing which will be able to have the qualities attributed to it.

Thus the more specific the requirements for individuality are, the more demanding the conditions set out by the case-bearer. The most specific kind of *axiōma* is the definite *axiōma* which is constituted by a demonstrative case-*ptōsis*: e.g. 'This one reads'. As S.E. reports (*M.* 8.100), the corresponding *axiōma* is true when the *katēgorēma* obtains with respect to 'that which falls under the demonstrative indicator'.⁶⁷ At first blush, this truth condition presents itself on a par with those for any kind of *axiōma*, that is to say, that an *axiōma* turns out true when the external object coincides with the *tunchanon*. But the conditions of specificity are especially high: for the first condition, which sets out the degree of particularity, requires not only that there be some thing, with such and such a quality (e.g. the quality of being Dion) but rather that there be a thing which has that quality and is here and now pointed at (this is the force of the indicator). This translates as the requirement that the thing in question be a body which has the quality, displayed here and now, of

⁶⁷ S.E. *M.* 8.100: 'τὸ ὑπὸ τὴν δεῖξιν πίπτοντι συμβεβήκη τὸ κατηγορήμα', this is one kind of *axiōma* as listed above at 9.2.1.

being, say, Dion. The thing must be a body since it is perceptible and pointed at, and it must be uniquely qualified.⁶⁸ In Greek, the demonstrative indicates gender and number such that the case-bearer corresponding to '*houtos peripatei*' ('this one (masculine singular) walks') requires that there be such a thing as this precise person, who is the man I am pointing to (and not merely be the individuating quality, say, of being Dion), and that he walks. The upshot is that it is possible not to satisfy this condition, which leads not to the falsification of the *axiōma*, but to its nullification and destruction—something which does not happen in any other case. It follows that only in the case of the definite *axiōma* are both the presence of a corresponding body and the individuating quality programmed into the very subsistence (not yet obtaining) of the state-of-affairs articulated by the *axiōma*. In all other kinds of *axiōmata* this is not the case. Let us see this at work with a well-known example.

9.2.6. RIP Dion

A failure to satisfy the condition of particularization of the definite *axiōma* will happen any time we cannot directly point to a body as the specific body indicated by the indicator. This is important for the Stoics, since a famous puzzle of theirs turns precisely on this matter: if we utter 'This one is dead', then either we have said something false because we have successfully pointed at the man Dion and he is, perforce, alive (for we could not point at him otherwise), or the Stoics say that the utterance corresponds to an impossible *axiōma*. If Dion is dead, then by uttering 'This one is dead' we cannot thereby get anything said, because not only can it never be true that this one is dead, but there is no such *lekton* there to be said. However, saying that Dion is dead is possible, and is in fact true, after Dion has died:

But 'This one is dead' is impossible. For once Dion has died, the *axiōma* [this one is dead] is destroyed, since the person who had received the demonstrative indicator no longer exists. For the demonstrative indicator belongs to the living and is said of the living.⁶⁹

The conditions of fulfilment of the *tunchanon* as it bears the demonstrative case-*ptōsis* corresponding to [this one is dead] are: that there be a body there present, indicated by the demonstrative, which, in addition, has the

⁶⁸ See Alex. in An. Pr. 177.28–9: a *deixis* implies 'pointing at the person Dion' ('*δεικνυμένου τοῦ Δίωνος*'). BRUNSCHWIG 1995a p.130 adds that the referent for a demonstrative indicator is fixed by spatio-temporal conditions.

⁶⁹ Alex. in An. Pr. 177.30–2: 'τὸ δὲ τέθνηκεν οὗτος' ἀδύνατον· ἀποθανόντος γὰρ Δίωνος φθίρεισθαι τὸ ἀξίωμα τὸ "οὗτος τέθνηκε" μηκέτ' ὄντος τοῦ τὴν δεῖξιν ἀναδεχομένου· ἐπὶ γὰρ ζώντος καὶ κατὰ ζώντος ἡ δεῖξις'.

individuating quality of being Dion. Thus either there is something there to point at, or there is nothing at all. But when there is nothing at all, the first condition of the *tunchanon*, that there be something which is this person, is unfulfilled and thus empty. The empty slot is not empty because of the lack of coincidence with an external object, but that coincidence is rendered impossible precisely because there is no such thing in reality as a body which is capable of having the individuating quality of being Dion (after Dion's death), and which could then also have the capacity of being dead. In other words, the very conditions set out by the *tunchanon*—namely that (i) there is a thing which is a body and is Dion, and (ii) that that thing is dead—present an internal contradiction. For the two conditions which are characteristically set out by the *tunchanon* are ontologically incompatible: a thing cannot be a pointed-at body with an individuating quality and be dead at one and the same time.

Alexander reports that for the Stoics, the *axiōma* is in fact destroyed. Since an *axiōma* is a thing in reality, being destroyed is not a metaphor. Properly speaking, the *axiōma* goes out of reality: it neither subsists nor obtains. There is thus something more here than the *tunchanon* just not coinciding with the external body. That is the case for as long as Dion is alive, where [this one is dead] subsists but is just false. The particularization involved in the first condition set out by the *tunchanon*, as the case-bearer of a demonstrative case-*ptōsis*, requires a body that is alive, that is to say a body displaying an individuating quality. When that quality is the quality of being an individual human being, then the body who has the quality is also thereby alive. In this example, therefore, the particularization necessarily zeroes in on a particular living man.

However, it is worth noting that each and every body in reality (with the sole exception of the active and passive principles⁷⁰) is constituted of a passive material on which a qualitative (also corporeal) agent acts so as to make it the individual thing it is (e.g. the tenor, or *hexis*, of a particular stone). Alexander's comment on the living being need not therefore be taken as restricting definite *axiōmata* to living beings. Rather, all bodies, for the Stoics, are understood as existing in virtue of the activity of the individuating quality on a passive element in them. Thus, each body has its own pair of active and passive whose interaction results in maintaining the thing as the individual thing it is.⁷¹ With living animals, part of what an individuating quality does to make the animal the animal it is, is keeping it alive. Thus the *tunchanon* corresponding to a demonstrative case-*ptōsis* requires the existence of the particular

⁷⁰ See 3.1.2 above on the two principles being entirely active for the active principle and entirely passive for the passive principle.

⁷¹ Thus uttering, on the morning after the earthquake in Rhodes in 226 BC: 'This one is crushed to smithereens' is just as impossible as 'This one is dead' is after Dion's death. And, just as 'Dion is dead' says something true after Dion's death, 'the Colossus of Rhodes is crushed to smithereens' says something true too.

body and the particular quality. When that combination does not exist, there is no *axiōma* there to be said. Bobzien (1986 p.111) comments on the disappearance of the *axiōma* by adding that, in fact, all that is left is the sentence and the *katēgorēma*. As far as the utterance is concerned, this seems right. After all, we do utter (and here, write) the sentence ‘this one is dead’. But it should follow that that sequence of words is either ‘meaningless’, as S.E. would say (cf. n.18 above) or indeed, as S.E. would also say (*ibid.*), would get something incomplete said.⁷² Perhaps just the *katēgorēma* [is dead], leaving us to ask ‘who?’. That is perhaps one way of considering that what is left is indeed a *katēgorēma*. But it must be clear in that case that the *katēgorēma* which would be left is not the *katēgorēma* which is said of the demonstrative case-*ptōsis*; for the *katēgorēma* is destroyed along with the whole *axiōma*. If there is a *katēgorēma* there to be said, it belongs to a different *axiōma*, one which is said of Dion, or perhaps of an indefinite particle, like ‘someone’.

For the sentence ‘Dion is dead’, in contrast, expresses an *axiōma* which is possible: it is false whilst Dion is alive, and true after he dies.

For he says that in the conditional ‘If Dion is dead, this one is dead’, which is true when Dion is pointed at, the antecedent ‘Dion is dead’ is possible, since it can at some point become true that Dion is dead.⁷³

This passage is famous for presenting Chrysippus’ rejection of the theory of modality developed by Diodorus Cronus in the well-known Master Argument, by affirming, against Diodorus, that the impossible can follow from the possible.⁷⁴ But it is not the account of modality and the implicative conditions that interest us here,⁷⁵ but rather the distinguishing features which make one *axiōma* survive with a change of truth-value and another perish altogether. The answer, as has already been suggested, turns on the degree of determinacy loaded on the case-bearers with respect to the two *axiōmata* involved. Note, therefore, that it is not the conditional itself that concerns us directly (which is one single not-simple *axiōma*), but the simple *axiōma* which Chrysippus

⁷² We find ourselves saying what we cannot say. Thus BARNES 2007 p.45 recasts in a humorous dialogue the Catch-22 situation the utterance of ‘this one is dead’ leads us to. For its joyful discernment, I quote it in full: ‘Have you heard that Dio is dead?’—‘What, at last? So what I said yesterday is now true.’—‘Oh, you said yesterday that Dio was dead, did you?’—‘Well, not quite.’—‘What did you say then?’—‘I’m afraid I can’t say it again; though I can tell you that I said it by uttering, in Dio’s presence, the sentence, ‘This man is dead.’—‘Yes, I see—you’re right: what you said yesterday and can’t say today was false when you said it and is true now that you can’t say it.’

⁷³ Alex. in. An. Pr. 177.28–30: ‘φησὶ γὰρ ἐν τῷ συνημμένῳ τῷ “εἰ τέθνηκε Δίων, τέθνηκεν οὗτος” δεικνυμένου τοῦ Δίωνος ἀληθεῖ ὄντι τὸ μὲν ἡγούμενον <τὸ> “τέθνηκε Δίων” δυνατόν εἶναι τῷ δύνασθαι ποτε ἀληθὲς γενέσθαι τὸ τεθνηκέναι Δίωνα’.

⁷⁴ See in 7.1.1 with n.7 above.

⁷⁵ For an analysis of the relations between possible antecedent and impossible consequent see BOBZIEN 1986 pp.106–13.

(Alexander seems to indicate that this is a quotation since he begins with ‘he says’ for Chrysippus) identifies as occupying the antecedent position, ‘Dion is dead’, and the simple *axiōma*, identified as occupying the consequent position ‘This one is dead’. The first *axiōma* corresponds to the intermediary kind according to S.E.’s classification (or categorical kind in D.L.’s list), and the second to the definite kind for S.E. (and *katagoreutikon* for D.L., which appears to be the more specifically Stoic term).

The difference between the two can be summarized in the following way. Before the death of Dion, ‘This one is dead’ turns out false, but satisfies the first condition, that there exists a body which is Dion. After Dion’s death, the first condition is not satisfied, and the whole *axiōma* is destroyed. With ‘Dion is dead’, before Dion’s death, the *axiōma* is false, but the first condition set out by the corresponding case-bearer, namely that there be something which is Dion, is satisfied. After Dion’s death, the *axiōma* is true, since both conditions are satisfied: there is a thing which is Dion, and that thing, the individuating quality Dion (which has, as one of its capacities, that of dying) is dead. What keeps the *axiōma* [Dion is dead] possible (at one time false, and at another true) in comparison to the destruction of [this one is dead] has to do with less tight requirements set out by the case-*ptōsis* and its case-bearer. The particularity, which it is the *tunchanon*’s role to achieve, need go only as far as identifying the individual quality, and not the body which has the quality. In other words, there need not be a body which has the quality for an intermediary *axiōma* to turn out true. For all that is necessary there is for that of which we have a concept to be particularized. The proper name, or common noun in a sentence thus plays the role of identifying the concept. The *axiōma* which is thus expressed frames one case of which a *katēgorēma* is said. The case-*ptōsis* in an *axiōma*, thanks to its case-bearer counterpart, thus fixes a particular instance of a more or less general kind.

9.2.7. The Case-*ptōsis*: the Particular Case of a Generic Concept

We learn from the Grammarians and the Aristotelian commentators that the Stoics call the case-*ptōsis*, ‘*ptōsis*’ precisely because of the relation of individuation which they identify between a concept and a case-*ptōsis*, which ‘falls from the concept’. Thus a scholiast to Dionysius Thrax reports:

it is possible to say that also the nominative is a ‘*ptōsis*’ for the following reason: namely because it has fallen from the general to the specific; it is therefore called a *ptōsis*.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ ΣDion. Th. 231.21–3: ‘δυνατὸν τὴν πτώσιν λέγεσθαι καὶ εὐθεῖαν κατὰ τινὰ λόγον· καθὸ μὲν γὰρ πέπτωκεν ἀπὸ τοῦ κοινοῦ εἰς ἰδιότητα, ὀνομάζεται πτώσις’. The Stoics are explicitly referred

The background to this discussion is the debate between the Stoics and Peripatetics on the nominative case: the Peripatetics follow Aristotle's lead (*Int.* 2, 16a32–16b1) in considering as an *onoma* (name, and thus not a case) what we have since been accustomed to call the nominative case, whereas only the oblique cases (inflections from the nominative) are *ptōseis*, cases. The Stoics, as we know, call all of these things '*ptōseis*', but not because they are grammatical inflections from a morphological matrix. They understand the usage of the term '*ptōsis*' differently, to describe an ontological item (hence my translation as case-*ptōsis* throughout). To justify the Aristotelian view, however, the Peripatetics will appropriate for themselves, from the Stoics, the etymological explanation that the oblique cases 'fall from' the *onoma*, which itself is not considered to be inflected.⁷⁷ For what a number of texts concerning the Stoics attest to, is that there is a relation between a concept and a case-*ptōsis* which is described by appealing to the morphological and etymological derivation of '*ptōsis*' from *piptein* (to fall).⁷⁸ Thus, parallel to the scholiast passage, Ammonius tells a fuller story:

The Stoics say that it [the case-*ptōsis*] has also fallen, from the concept in our soul. For when we want to reveal the concept of Socrates which we have in ourselves, we utter the name of Socrates. But that is just like a pen released from a height and lodged upright, which is then said both to have fallen, *peptōkenai*, and to have the upright fall, *orthē ptōsis*; for in the same way, we (the Stoics) assert that the nominative has fallen from the conception, and it is upright, because it is the archetypal usage in speech.⁷⁹

The case-*ptōsis* as a constituent of the *axiōma* is, to speak like Ammonius, archetypically straight or direct, which indeed coincides with what the Grammarians, such as the scholiast above, and we today in their wake, call a

to at the beginning of this passage at 230.27. Similar reports are found in ΣDion.Th. 230.25, 383.11, and 550.25–6.

⁷⁷ This explanation does not appear in Aristotle, but Amm. *in de Int.* 43.5–7 and Stephanus *in de Int.* 10.24–6 use the Stoic notion to explain the grammatical phenomenon. From here, the ultimate merger is carried out by the Grammarians, as we can see from the scholion cited in the previous footnote.

⁷⁸ Thus a passage in Stobaeus, *Ecl.* 1.50.30, though it does not mention the *ptōsis*, belongs nevertheless to this group of texts: 'Χρύσιππος τὸ μὲν γενικὸν ἢδὺ νοητόν, τὸ δὲ εἰδικὸν καὶ προσπίπτον ἢδὲ αἰσθητόν', 'Chrysippus says that sweetness is a generic concept, but that the perceptible is specific and has fallen from the concept'. The perceptible here is easily recognizable as a quality.

⁷⁹ Amm. *in de Int.* 43.9–15: 'οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοᾶς ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ νοήματος τοῦ ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ καὶ αὐτῇ πέπτωκεν· ὁ γὰρ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἔχομεν τὸ Σωκράτους νόημα δηλῶσαι βουλόμενοι, τὸ Σωκράτης ὄνομα προφερόμεθα· καθάπερ οὖν τὸ ἄνωθεν ἀφεθὲν γραφεῖον καὶ ὀρθὸν παγὲν πεπτωκέναι τε λέγεται καὶ τὴν πτώσειν ὀρθὴν ἐσχηκέναι, τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ τὴν εὐθείαν πεπτωκέναι μὲν ἀξιοῦμεν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐννοίας, ὀρθὴν δὲ εἶναι διὰ τὸ ἀρχέτυπον τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἐκφώνησιν προφορᾶς' (trans. BLANK 1996, modified). See also the more succinct Stephanus *in de Int.* 10.28, referring to the Stoics: 'πτῶσις δὲ διότι πέπτωκεν ἀπὸ τοῦ νοήματος', 'it is called a case-*ptōsis* because it has fallen from the concept'. The same view is attributed to the Grammarians in the *Anon. in de Int.* 2.14–15.

nominative. Ammonius adds his own explanation, which is not especially helpful since the comparison he introduces merely spins further the metaphor of falling. But one thing is clear: the concept is considered as something generic and encompassing which resides in us (and depends on us). And the case-*ptōsis* is a relay between us and the thing external to us which we want to get said, or reveal, as we have it in the text.

The role of the case-*ptōsis* is thus to mediate between a concept and an external object. The Stoics' talk of the case-*ptōsis* as 'falling from the concept' comes down to the case-*ptōsis*, indicating a particular instance of what we have a concept of.⁸⁰ It is the particularization which is the characteristic of the case-*ptōsis*, and which itself is governed by what the *katēgorēma* requires. The case-*ptōsis* therefore cannot be identified with the quality which a noun or name, on its own, signifies. For though the case-*ptōsis* determines a particular case of, say, the quality of being Socrates, the case-*ptōsis* is itself not that quality. For its only *raison d'être* is to be that to which the *katēgorēma* is attributed. In virtue of that attribution there is a *tunchanon* whose role is to uphold the conditions of existence of this quality. But we can see that this goes beyond qualities, since all that of which we have concepts can be thus mediated through the case-*ptōsis* and the associated *tunchanon*.

In this way the Stoics can provide an analysis of sentences such as 'a *lekton* is an incorporeal', or indeed 'a concept develops only in the mind', though neither a *lekton* nor a concept are corporeal qualities. For the corresponding *axiōmata* are constituted of a case-*ptōsis* whose role is to determine a particular case of the concept, here the concept we have of a *lekton*. There are corresponding case-bearers for each *axiōma*: there is something which is a *lekton* and that thing is incorporeal, there is something which is the content of our conceptions, and that develops in the mind.⁸¹ We avoid identifying the case-*ptōsis* with qualities themselves since we distinguish the name or noun from the case-*ptōsis* and from the *tunchanon*, which itself can and can also not coincide with the external thing. Frede reaches the conclusion that a case-*ptōsis* must coincide with a quality and therefore that a case-*ptōsis* is a quality, because he does not envisage the distinction between the case-bearer and the external thing.⁸² Without the *tunchanon* as the third tier, both the roles of particularizing what we have concepts of, and being an instance of a quality, are down to the case-*ptōsis*. The inevitable conclusion, then, is that an *axiōma* is constituted of a corporeal item, the case-*ptōsis*, identified as a quality, and an

⁸⁰ See ILDEFONSE 1997 pp.161–2 speaking of *ptōseis* as 'actualizations of concepts'.

⁸¹ Concepts are not-somethings, but here it is not concepts themselves that are in question, such as man in 'man is a rational animal', but the meta-theoretical concept of having a concept, which consists in our coming to appreciate the mental process involved.

⁸² FREDE 1994b p.20f.

incorporeal *katēgorēma*.⁸³ On this view the *ptōsis* cannot be an incorporeal *lekton*, precisely because it is a corporeal thing.

Such a conclusion has been contested.⁸⁴ As we have already seen (cf. 8.2.2.2 above), Gaskin takes the view that the case-*ptōsis* is incorporeal and an incomplete *lekton*, basing his argument mainly on the sophism about the house coming out of one's mouth as discussed by Clement, who concludes this must be a *ptōsis*; and on S.E.'s giving the man Dion as an example of a *tunchanon* at *M.* 8.12. We have already said enough about the difficulties with those texts.

9.2.8. The Case-*ptōsis*: Neither Body nor *Lekton*

The view which has been taking shape in these pages leads to a different conclusion concerning the status of the case-*ptōsis*: it is neither a body nor an incomplete *lekton*. For the case-*ptōsis* itself has no status. It is nothing at all outside of the *lekton*, neither existent nor subsistent. It is a case-*ptōsis* only insofar as there is a *katēgorēma* with which it is combined. The case-*ptōsis* is in fact always and only actually combined with a *katēgorēma*—and not combinable with one, which would give it some form of independence, as the *katēgorēma* has, for instance, which is in effect 'combinable' (*'suntakton'*) and can be 'uncombined' (*'asuntheton'*), as that which is signified by a verb (*D.L.* 7.58). The case-*ptōsis*, in contrast, is neither corporeal nor incorporeal, for in itself there is no such thing. Only in belonging to a *lekton*, in combination with a *katēgorēma*, is it a part of an incorporeal item with a distinct role to play.

Names and appellatives, uttered individually, signify corporeal qualities. In order to smooth out what seems like a jarring combination, Jean-Baptiste Gourinat suggests that names and appellatives signify something else, in addition, by signifying also an incorporeal *ptōsis* when they are parts of a sentence.⁸⁵ But this is confusing two very different things: naming a quality by uttering the relevant word, and saying something. To say something, words are uttered at the service of a sentence, in order to express the ontological unit, which is the *lekton*. In virtue of the internal structure which binds the *lekton*, the sentence moulds itself to that internal structure. But it is a mistake—a mistake which was made early on, by the first critics of the Stoics in antiquity—to identify the separate parts of speech which compose

⁸³ See also SCHUBERT 1994 pp.100–4 defending the presence of a corporeal quality within an incorporeal *lekton*. LONG & SEDLEY 1987 p.200 suggest a similar hybrid, though the corporeal item is not, on their proposal, a quality, but rather the corporeal word which is inflected (they interpret the Stoics' use of '*ptōsis*' as referring to the inflected forms of words) and the incorporeal *katēgorēma*. A similar interpretation is given by ATHERTON 1993 p.281.

⁸⁴ GASKIN 1997 p.967; GOURINAT 2000 pp.124–8.

⁸⁵ GOURINAT 2000 p.128.

a sentence with a separate part of a *lekton*. The dynamics which govern the structure of the *lekton* are ontological (such that the case-*ptōsis*, for instance, is utterly dependent on the *katēgorēma*); those that govern the order of the sentence are grammatical and come within the range of the virtues of speech. Thus names, appellatives, or pronouns, which appear in a sentence, stand for that which the *katēgorēma* is said of. But it is the relation with the *katēgorēma* which is prior. The degree of particularization, and (in the case in which the *katēgorēma* is truly attributed) the eventual coincidence with an external thing follow from that relation, rather than anticipate it.

Furthermore, the case-*ptōsis* is not the only item which can combine with a *katēgorēma* to constitute an *axiōma*. Negative parts, such as ‘no-one’ (*‘oudeis’*), or indefinite parts (‘someone’) can fill in the role (D.L. 7.70). The indefinite *axiōma*, which is ‘the combination of an indefinite part or parts and a *katēgorēma*’ is pure particularization with no additional markers of quality of the kind of thing, whereas the negative pronoun denies this particularization.⁸⁶ This fluidity of the item combined to the *katēgorēma*, in contrast to the fixity of the *katēgorēma*, corroborates the account according to which the combined part depends on the requirements of the *katēgorēma*. When we utter the words ‘Dion’ or ‘horse’, we are not prompted to ask further about these utterances, in the way that we are when we utter ‘neighs’, for example.

The case-*ptōsis* stands out from amongst the other possible combinatorial parts and is thus ‘archetypal’, as Ammonius notes, since it adds to the condition of particularization that of a quality or another individuating marker of which the *katēgorēma* is said. The *axiōmata* containing a case-*ptōsis* are therefore of particular interest to the rational inhabitants of the cosmos, since we can gain positive information and can proceed in investigations thanks to these *axiōmata*. But what is crucial for the Stoics is that this kind of information is articulated in terms governed by the *katēgorēma*’s needs, which rely ultimately on the status of the *katēgorēma*, i.e., its obtaining or subsisting. For it is the relation of the *katēgorēma* with what it is said of (truly or falsely) that then provides informative truths or falsehoods about particular objects of reality.

9.2.9. Oblique Cases: Surface Grammar After All?

Ammonius describes (in the quotation above) the archetypal combination of a *katēgorēma* with a direct case-*ptōsis* by comparing it to the gravitational pull which makes things fall straight down, or directly. This is the norm. But the Stoics, in their great attention to the needs, i.e., conditions for attribution of the *katēgorēma*, see that, alongside the norm, there are other combinations

⁸⁶ See EGLI 1967 p.38; FREDE 1974 p.72; Bobzien in *CHHP* p.103.

which the *katēgorēma* governs with its dependent case-*ptōsis*. There are two ways, in fact, that the *katēgorēma* combines: directly or obliquely. The Stoics thus refer questions which, at the level of the grammatical arrangement of sentences, appear as matters of inflection of words, to a question of the structure of a *lekton*, namely to the precise way a *katēgorēma* relates to the item it is said of.⁸⁷ In this perspective, the Stoics distinguish between a *katēgorēma* and a *parakatēgorēma*, as noted earlier (in 8.1.3.5.1 above). The *katēgorēma* combines with a direct case, and the *parakatēgorēma* with an oblique case.⁸⁸ It would seem as though, here, the Stoics address a particularity of Greek, namely that impersonal verbs combine with a noun-agent in the dative and not the nominative: e.g., ‘*Sōcratei metamelei*’, which translates literally as ‘it is a regret for Socrates’. The *lekton* thus expressed is constituted not from the archetypal direct case-*ptōsis* combined with the *katēgorēma*, in which the *katēgorēma* is said of the case-*ptōsis* and which is expressed in a sentence by a noun in the nominative and a verb agreeing with the person and number of the noun; rather, as we noted earlier, the relation between the *katēgorēma* and the case-*ptōsis* is altered. It is an alteration in the relation which the Stoics take seriously enough to coin the term ‘*parakatēgorēma*’ in order to capture what changes, at the ontological, structural level, between ‘it is a regret for Socrates’ and ‘Socrates regrets’.⁸⁹ The *parakatēgorēma* is thus indirectly said of a case-*ptōsis*, which, in virtue of this indirect relation, is not direct any longer, but oblique. It follows that the conditions for obtaining, as also for subsisting, are altered as well: what it takes for [there is regret] to obtain is different from what makes [Socrates regret] obtain.

The Grammarians are quick to eliminate the difficulty, showing that these formulations can be easily recomposed to conform with the standard model: thus ‘*Sōcratei metamelei*’ (‘it is a regret for Socrates’) is shown to be equivalent to ‘*Sōcratēs metameleitai*’ (‘Socrates regrets’). Apollonius refers to the same ‘conception’ (‘*nooumenon*’) which underlies both formulations and thus guarantees their equivalence.⁹⁰ It would seem that, yet again, the Grammarians

⁸⁷ See DELAMARRE 1980 p.338.

⁸⁸ Porphyry quoted by Amm. in *de Int.* 44.23–32.

⁸⁹ It is a coinage Lucian mocks the Stoics in particular for making, as excessive pedantry, see Luc. *Vit. Auct.* 21.14–24.

⁹⁰ Ap. *Dysc. Synt.* 3.431.10–11: ‘ἐν τῷ μέλει Σωκράτει, οὐκ ἄλλο τι ἢ τὸ παρυσιστάμενον πρᾶγμα ἐν εὐθείᾳ νοούμενον. Τοιοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν τὸ νοούμενον, μέλει τὸ φιλοσοφεῖν Πλάτωνι—φροντίδα Πλάτωνι ἐμποιεῖ ἢ φιλοσοφία’, ‘With “there is concern for Socrates”, the action is merely described indirectly, though it is conceived of directly. For there is the same sort of conception in “to philosophize is a concern for Plato”, as in “philosophy creates concerns for Plato”’. Apollonius shows that what seems to be an impersonal formulation is actually personal, i.e. there is an agent in the nominative, direct case, such that the agent-apparent in the impersonal formulation (in the dative) is actually not the agent, but he who receives the action from the agent. The apparent irregularity is thus grammatically saved by revealing the implicit agent, and conceptually sound in that it is always one and the same thought expounded through different formulations. See on this ILDEFONSE 1997 p.344.

level out a subtle point the Stoics take as a question of ontological structure. For the Stoics reaffirm, by drawing attention to the indirect way a *katēgorēma* can be said of a case-*ptōsis*, that the syntactical relation between the *katēgorēma* and the case-*ptōsis* is based on the way in which the *katēgorēma* is said of something. This ultimately indicates, for the Stoics, that the state-of-affairs corresponding to the *katēgorēma*'s being said directly or indirectly of a case-*ptōsis* bears a different relation to the external thing. Thus 'it is a regret to Socrates' and 'Socrates regrets' are two different *lekta*, not because of the grammatical form, but because there are two different states-of-affairs with respect to Socrates which are thereby revealed. The difference in grammatical form is, for the Stoics, indicative of these structural differences.

In the recent scholarship a different strategy is employed, which ultimately leads to a similar conclusion. It is the line of interpretation which is committed to the equal share of incompleteness of both *katēgorēma* and case-*ptōsis*, and which is jeopardized by the imbalance between the seeming malleability of the case-*ptōsis* and the fixity and centrality of the *katēgorēma*. Thus Gaskin (1997 p.95) takes the two formulae to correspond to one and the same item 'at the lektikal level'. That is to say, that even when there does not appear to be something filling the subject-term (and which must, on this reading, perforce be present as a necessary part or otherwise constitute on its own, an incomplete *lekton*), there actually is an item there. The assumptions which ground the commitment to the *ptōsis* corresponding to an incomplete *lekton* are therefore brought to the fore: namely that, like the *katēgorēma*, the case-*ptōsis* must always be present to complete a *lekton*. Thus, to preserve the claim that the subject-term expresses an incomplete *lekton* on its own, it must be shown that there is a subject-term at all times. Thus on his reading, 'Socrates regrets' and 'there is regret for Socrates' correspond to exactly the same combinatorial pair 'at the lektikal level', the case-*ptōsis* [Socrates] and the *katēgorēma* [regrets].

To maintain this interpretation, however, Gaskin is forced to marginalize a whole aspect of the Stoic characterization of the *katēgorēma*. For in the paragraph D.L. devotes to the Stoic account of the *katēgorēma* (D.L. 7.64–5), more than half of the passage examines the classification of the kinds of *katēgorēmata* according to the way they are combined to a case-*ptōsis*, directly or obliquely. This is not marginal or anecdotal. It might seem that the Stoics do not make use of the distinction in their logic, since there are no *axiōmata* there, which would be constituted by *parakatēgorēmata*. The Stoics focus only on the archetypal structure for their logic, that of the direct case-*ptōsis* combined with a *katēgorēma*.⁹¹ This is not the same thing as considering that one formulation is equivalent to another. Rather, the distinctions are

⁹¹ See in this regard ILDEFONSE 1997 pp.166–7 who speaks of the 'privileges of the direct case' because it is used to express what is preferable as an ethical maxime (e.g., health is a good).

made all the better to identify the kind of *axiōma* from which deductions and inferences can be made. Moreover, both from the Stoics' holding fast to the distinction, in terms of the two combinations corresponding to different ontological structures, and from the Stoics' not making use of impersonal constructions in logical arguments, it is plausible to infer that the combination of a *parakatēgorēma* with an oblique case does not constitute an *axiōma* at all. The sentence expressing 'there is regret for Socrates' does not express something which is either true or false.

Some of the difficulties which we have encountered in the texts cited in this chapter concerning the identification of a Stoic view about the *ptōsis* are, in part, tied to the fact that the term '*ptōsis*' is used, in the Peripatetic tradition, to refer to the inflected forms of words (as we noted at the beginning of 9.2.7 above). As we have seen, it is not merely a question of the Stoics' also calling '*ptōsis*' what the Aristotelians reserve the term '*onoma*' for. This difference is but the basis for far greater, more fundamental differences between the Stoic and Peripatetic views. The Peripatetics are concerned with a description of the behaviour of expressions. The Stoics develop an account of the case-*ptōsis* as they develop an account of the structure of *lekta*. However, it is not difficult to see how the two views can be confused, given that the relation between the case-*ptōsis* and the *katēgorēma* is reflected, on the Stoic view, by the inflection of nouns in the corresponding signifying sentence. In this way, a commentator who disregards the distinction between words and *lekta* may easily end up confusing the Peripatetics' talk of the *onoma* and its *ptōseis* (inflections) with the Stoic talk of the case-*ptōsis* which combines directly or obliquely with the *katēgorēma*. As Frede (1994b p.24) notes, the Aristotelian notion of the *ptōsis* is not associated with the declension of nouns. For Aristotle also speaks of the '*ptōsis*' of the verb for the conjugated forms of the verb and its conjugation in other tenses (past and future).⁹² For Aristotle, the notion of a *ptōsis* is the notion of a word-form considered as deriving from a standard form. The Stoics are thus not concerned with the same notion at all when they establish the notion of a case-*ptōsis* as an item which combines with a *katēgorēma*.

It is the Stoics' contribution to grammar to have narrowed down the scope of what counts as a *ptōsis* and restricted the parts of speech associated with *ptōseis*, namely to the class of nouns (proper and common). The Grammarians, for instance, discuss the *ptōsis* in terms only of the declension of nouns. They also adopt the Stoic terminology for the designations of the different cases, considered, like the Peripatetics, as the transformations of word-forms.⁹³ It is the Stoics themselves who associate the notion of

⁹² Arist. *Int.* 3, 16b16–17, and see 8.2.2.2 above.

⁹³ The Grammarians speak of the 'five cases' (e.g. Dion. Th. 24.7, 31.5 etc.), sometimes justifying the fact that they count the nominative as a case as well (with more or less explicit references to the Stoic origin of this view). A number of passages spin further the story told in

‘declinability’ (*ptōtikon*) and ‘indeclinability’ (*aptōton*) of parts of speech with the phenomenon of declension specifically: thus verbs are indeclinable (in contrast to the Aristotelian application of *ptōsis* to verbs as well), but articles are declinable (D.L. 7.58). In this way the Stoics acknowledge that, in virtue of the presence of a case-*ptōsis* within a *lekton*, and in particular with reference to the way it combines with the *katēgorēma*, certain words in sentences are *ptōtika*, i.e. declined or declinable.

9.2.10. The Verb and the (Un)combined *Katēgorēma*

Of all the parts of speech, the only one which expresses a part of a *lekton* is the verb:

A verb is a part of speech signifying an uncombined *katēgorēma*, according to Diogenes of Babylon, or, according to some others, an indeclinable part of speech signifying something combined to some thing or things, such as ‘I write’, ‘I say’.⁹⁴

D.L. provides us with two descriptions of the verb. At first sight it seems that the descriptions are contradictory: for the first contains a key word, which is ‘uncombined’, and the second, a key word which is ‘combined’. The accounts, however, are not incompatible. As has been anticipated in previous pages, this apparent dissonance points to the complexity of the role of the *katēgorēma*. It is fundamentally an ontological item. It is also an incomplete thing said, when we speak. The two descriptions in D.L. map onto these two roles, especially since the main concern in this context is not so much to capture the status and role of the *katēgorēma*, but that of the verb.

The first description, attributed to Diogenes of Babylon, states the relation between verb and *katēgorēma* as one in which the verb directly signifies the *katēgorēma*. But the emphasis on the *katēgorēma*, in this case, considered as uncombined, draws attention to the peculiar status of the *katēgorēma*. For if it is necessary to emphasize that the verb picks out the *katēgorēma* when it is uncombined, it follows that the *katēgorēma* is not in fact an uncombined sort of thing. There is therefore something artificial, or technical, in calling out the uncombined *katēgorēma*.

We have come across just such an artificial presentation, when it comes to the discussion of the *katēgorēma*, in passages which frame the role of the *katēgorēma* with respect to other items in ontology. When, that is, wisdom

Ammonius in *de Int.* 43.12–13 (cf. n.79 above), about the different positions a dice or pen lands in once thrown: they can fall straight or askew: see ΣDion. Th. 546.12–13, Choeroboscus 109.25–34. See further ILDEFONSE 1997 pp.162–5, 410–17.

⁹⁴ D.L. 7.58: ‘ῥῆμα δέ ἐστι μέρος λόγου σημαίνον ἀσύνθετον κατηγορήμα, ὡς ὁ Διογένης, ἢ, ὡς τινες, στοιχεῖον λόγου ἁπλῶτος, σημαίνον τι συντακτὸν περὶ τινος ἢ τινῶν, οἷον Γράφω, Λέγω.’

causes [to be wise] to obtain; when, in another related context, I assent to the thought that I must write, and subsequently act such that [to write] obtains with respect to me; when, in yet another example, [to have a field] is distinguished as belonging to a different ontological category from the field itself. In those discussions, as we previously noted, the *katēgorēma* is often referred to through the infinitive form of the verb (this is the consideration made in 8.2.2.1 above). The *katēgorēma* in these contexts is always analysed in its relation with other things. But as far as the verb which stands for it is concerned, it picks out artificially, i.e. in a pre-linguistic and thus non-enunciative form, the ontological item uncombined. For in these contexts, it is the very constituents of the structural combination the *katēgorēma* is part of that are being described. Thus it is the relation of, (say), [to be wise] to Socrates which is being analysed.

But when it comes to discussing enunciation, i.e. the expressive formulation which enunciates a *lekton*, then the enunciative form (the *ekphora*) is appealed to. In these contexts, as discussed above, the verb in the expression is conjugated (8.2.2.3 above). As we saw above (8.2.2.2 with n.63), there are subsequent discussions amongst the Grammarians about the term ‘verb’ being wrongfully reserved for the infinitive form alone. These presumably originate in part in the Stoic identification of the verb with the uncombined *katēgorēma*.

It is the difference between an artificial, i.e. pre-linguistic, use of the infinitive and the fluid use of conjugated forms to express *lekta* which is framed in the description of the verb in D.L. 7.58. The second formulation describes the contribution of the verb in expressing a self-complete *lekton*. The verb expresses the part of the *lekton* which combines to some thing or things. We are told that the verb is ‘indeclinable’, which marks the difference between the verb, the name and the appellative in the following way: that the Stoics recognize in the inflections of nouns (i.e. names and appellatives) the reflection of the dependence of the case-*ptōsis* on the requirements of the *katēgorēma*, whether it is said directly or indirectly, thereby requiring a direct or oblique case-*ptōsis*. The verb, in contrast, bears no such alterations. What the verb expresses is the terms of the combination (i.e. what I have been calling the requirements of the *katēgorēma*), namely in what way it combines, not if it combines in the first place; for it always combines. That is why uttering the verb on its own will never fail to raise pressing questions, first and foremost the question: ‘who?’.

But presumably we will also, at times, also ask ‘what?’, or ‘to what?’, or ‘for what?’. This much is implied in the formula in D.L.: ‘combined to some thing or things’, ‘*suntakton peri tinos ē tinōn*’, which is a peculiar phrase on two counts: firstly, the use of ‘*peri*’ with the genitive is non-specific as to the way the *katēgorēma* is combined. The more common and precise way of using ‘*suntattein*’ is with a dative without a preposition, as is illustrated in the

discussion of *katēgorēmata* in D.L. 7.64: a *katēgorēma* combines with a direct case-*ptōsis* to form an *axiōma*.⁹⁵ We know from the discussion in D.L. 7.64 that there are in fact not only different combinations in which the *katēgorēma* is involved (we have seen above the difference between directly and indirectly being said of), but also that a *katēgorēma* itself can be incomplete in that it requires an object (which would then be answering to the question ‘what?’), which itself is a case-*ptōsis* combined to the *katēgorēma*. Thus the generality suggested by the ‘*peri tinos ē tinōn*’ captures the possibility of further intricacies in the syntax of the *katēgorēma* within the *lekton*—always governed by the requirements of the *katēgorēma*. This is further suggested by the addition of ‘thing or things’. Two sets of possibilities are thus covered with the addition of the plural: either that, in the case of a sentence containing a plural subject, the *katēgorēma* is in fact said of a number of particulars: e.g. ‘children are playing’ is analysed into the *katēgorēma* [is playing] being said of each child individually.⁹⁶ Or the *katēgorēma* is combined with more than just one element: something it is said of, and something which completes it. The focus on the verb enables the Stoics to further develop a question about the syntax of the *katēgorēma*, and what it means for a *katēgorēma* to be the sort of thing which is always combined, and combinable. The syntax of the *lekton* thus ultimately relies on the fundamental syntactical structure of the *katēgorēma*.

The *katēgorēma* is the part of a *lekton* which necessitates an additional element to form a complete *lekton*. The examination of the specific role of the verb, however, reveals that there is a distinction to make, not only between something complete said, and something incomplete, but that the incomplete thing said itself admits of internal incompleteness.⁹⁷ Or rather: the *katēgorēma* itself admits of an internal structure. This is, in fact, the foundation for a distinction between a one-place and a two-place *katēgorēma*, which the Stoics however do not think of in such levelled terms.⁹⁸ For the Stoics, the primordial relation is that between the *katēgorēma* and that of which it is said (paradigmatically, the case-*ptōsis*). But there are some kinds of *katēgorēmata* which

⁹⁵ D.L. 7.64: ‘*συντακτὸν ὀρθῇ πτώσει πρὸς ἀξιώματος γένεσιν*’. ‘*suntakton*’ is here constructed with a dative (*orthē ptōsei*). The different combinations the *katēgorēma* can enter are all expressed in this precise way; see other examples at 9.2.1 above.

⁹⁶ The case of plural subject sentences is thus a case of distributed particularization. In a passage on the truth conditions of sentences containing plurals, S.E. M. 10.99 develops an analysis ascribed to Diodorus, which puts into practice distributed particularization with a striking example: the three husbands of Helen of Troy. ‘These men married Helen’ can be analysed in two ways: either that they married her together, which is false, or that there is a string of singular propositions which underlies it, namely ‘this man married her’, ‘this man married her’, ‘this man married her’ (where the *deixis*, each time, points to a different person), and where each *axiōma* is true in a determinate context. See further on this CRIVELLI 1994b.

⁹⁷ See Porphyry reported in Amm. in *de Int.* 44.34, who speaks of a ‘less than a *katēgorēma*’.

⁹⁸ See Barnes in *CHHP* pp.204–5.

require something in addition in order to become a *katēgorēma* properly speaking:

Amongst *katēgorēmata*, some are direct, some reversed, and some neither direct nor reversed. The direct are combined (*suntassomena*) with one of the oblique case-*ptōseis* to produce a *katēgorēma*, such as ‘hears’, ‘sees’, ‘converses’; the reversed are combined (*suntassomena*) with a passive part, such as ‘I am heard’, ‘I am seen’; those which are neither direct nor reversed, have no such combination, such as ‘is wise’, ‘walks’.⁹⁹

‘The report draws on a familiar Stoic practice, that of duplicating the heading and sub-heading term, according to which there is a broader and a stricter understanding of the term ‘*katēgorēma*’.¹⁰⁰ The broad application functions here as a heading term, covering all kinds of *katēgorēmata*, distinguished into kinds because of the different ways they combine to their necessary combinatorial pair. A stricter application requires an examination of these different combinations. Whereas on the broad application, the word ‘*katēgorēma*’ covers all that makes up the thing which is said of something, the stricter understanding narrows the designation of ‘*katēgorēma*’ to the thing which requires to be combined. This opens the analysis to the internal syntax of the *katēgorēma*, which may itself require something in addition in order to be the thing said of something. In effect, the strict understanding of the *katēgorēma* coincides with what a verb expresses, namely the part of the *lekton* which combines with one or more case-*ptōseis*.

Thus the utterance of ‘hears’ expresses something which lacks the object of hearing, whereas ‘hears music’ does not lack this, but stands for an incomplete *lekton*, a *katēgorēma* which is said of something. The incomplete *katēgorēma* [hears] is combined to an oblique case-*ptōsis* (expressed in the Greek sentence in the genitive); the incomplete *lekton* [hears music] is combined with a direct case-*ptōsis* (expressed in the Greek sentence by a nominative). In the case of the reversed *katēgorēma*, e.g., ‘I am heard’, the utterance does not trigger the question ‘who?’, but requires an answer to ‘by whom?’. Although, in fact, the answer to this latter question reveals the agent of the action, it nevertheless is considered to complete the *katēgorēma*, and not the *lekton*. The Stoics thus emphasize two points: for one, that the question of the internal syntax of the *katēgorēma* is a subordinate concern to the completion of the *lekton*; and secondly, that it is the precise requirements of a *katēgorēma* which determine the structure of the nuclear relation it forms with what it is said of. The Stoics, in other words, are not fixating on the form of the verbs used, but are framing

⁹⁹ D.L.7.64: ‘τὰ μὲν ἐστὶ τῶν κατηγορημάτων ὀρθά, ἃ δ’ ὑπτία, ἃ δ’ οὐδέτερα. ὀρθὰ μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ τὰ συντασσόμενα μὴ τῶν πλαγίων πτώσεων πρὸς κατηγορήματος γένεσιν, οἷον Ἀκούει, Ὁρᾷ, Διαλέγεται. ὑπτία δ’ ἐστὶ τὰ συντασσόμενα τῷ παθητικῷ μορίῳ, οἷον Ἀκούομαι, Ὁρώμαι. οὐδέτερα δ’ ἐστὶ τὰ μηδετέρως ἔχοντα, οἷον Φρονεῖν, Περιπατεῖν.’

¹⁰⁰ See on this practice, 3.2.4. n.91 above.

these forms in terms of how they capture different kinds of relations of combination which different *katēgorēmata* require. These, in turn, correspond to the various states-of-affairs that constitute the cosmic *systema*.

* * *

The Stoics arrive at their distinctions out of one single preoccupation, namely the relation which different elements contained within a *lekton* have with the *katēgorēma* on the strict understanding of the term. It is the *katēgorēma* which governs all combinations and orders them: thus being said of, is different from being the object of. We recognize in these distinctions the verbs we call to this day, transitive, passive, or intransitive. But whereas, since their assimilation by the Grammarians, these distinctions describe the nature of expressions, we see how for the Stoics the analysis is focused on the ontological requirements of the *katēgorēma*. The *katēgorēma* is thus the key to the unity of the *lekton*. It alone governs the structure of the *lekton*, in such a way that each element is combined to it necessarily.

APPENDIX

Dance and *Lekta*

‘Nothing in dance must be outside of *logos*.’

Lucian of Samosata, *On Dance*

The jacket photograph and frontispiece is a still from a contemporary ballet, *Raven Girl*, created in 2013 by the choreographer Wayne McGregor for The Royal Ballet.¹ It captures a moment in which someone is saying something to people who do not understand what is being said. In this clash of miscommunication there is, in addition to the bodies perceptible in the image, the presence, though invisible, of precisely that thing which is being said; it is the presence of a *lekton*. A thing, there to be said, regardless of being expressed or understood, and which the Stoics identified as the thing ‘revealed to a language speaker through his or her language of communication’, but which ‘subsists’ regardless of being understood by any language speaker.² The photograph is thus as close as one could hope to get to a photograph of an incorporeal imperceptible *lekton*, framed by the use of a non-verbal language, dance, a language of the body.

In the right-hand corner stands the title-role figure of the raven girl: half human, half raven, her mouth open in an intense effort to reproduce the action humans perform when they speak; but nothing comes out. In the background, an unkindness of ravens flies majestically across the sky, in a display of their own secret laws of communication. In the forefront, a crowd of humans lend, with emphatic gestures, their ears to the sound which they cannot hear, puzzlement spread across their moony faces. The configuration of the set thus depicts, in terms of the geometry of planes, the predicament of the raven girl who, in straddling two worlds, can communicate with neither. She cannot fly like the ravens or speak like the humans.

And yet she is saying something. True enough, the photograph is but an instant captured from a flow of motion. But it is an instant that crystallizes what the third-century BC Stoics discovered about language and its instrumental relation to the structure of the world. It takes time for bodies to express things (the time it takes to utter a sentence, or—as we see here—the time it takes to dance out a sequence of movements), but what there is to say is there, real and present, independently of the time it takes to express it. The critics attack the Stoics because of this time-gap: once we utter one word, the previous one is no longer actual, nor is the next word yet uttered, how—they ask—do we get one single meaningful thing said, the *lekton*, in the slow-paced action of uttering word after word, syllable after syllable, which goes into making up a sentence?

¹ Drawing on the eponymous contemporary fairy-tale by NIFFENEGGER 2013.

² S.E. M. 8.12.

But what better way to reveal the presence of that thing, the *lekton*, which is there to be said, than when the means of expression are denied? As the onlookers of the dance, or the fortuitous observers of the cover photograph, we become the students of the rational order of the world: we come to understand, firstly, the staged incomprehension between the crowd of human figures and the raven girl, and secondly, that the raven girl is trying to get something across, which is there, hanging there, waiting to be expressed by a means propitious to it. The raven girl stands in a way that already obeys a grammar of a language of the body: immobile at an extended tilt, with her arms, like clipped wings, in a position which indicates that she is on the verge of movement. She is a dancer. Though remaining still in this instant of failure to communicate, she will find her language soon, and will begin to dance, obeying the laws of the choreography. The humans, stiff and stunted, are blind and deaf to her arrested call. They are the speakers, incapable of understanding the dancer.

The *Raven Girl* is a ballet which enacts the emancipation of dance from its traditional role of descriptive story-telling. It was not, in 2013, the first contemporary ballet to break the mould of narrative and embrace abstraction, revealing dance as a language in itself, rather than an accompaniment to a story. But the specificity of this work is to retrace the steps of how contemporary dance became an inquiry into the language of the body; this makes *Raven Girl* the equivalent of a book of popularization of new discoveries in the sciences, and a manifesto for dance's grammatical capacity to get some things said that speech cannot. What McGregor thus uncovers is the capacity of the body to express the complex, articulated states-of-affairs which are there to be said, without using codified gestures, but rather by moulding the body to a precise grammar, just as speech is the moulding of sounds to correct rules, or, as the Stoics call them, 'virtues of speech'.

In this book, in particular in 4.4 above, we have seen the Stoics draw attention to the expressivity and articulation of the body as a parallel and distinct mode of expression to speech. A case-study the Stoics themselves put forward, that of the gymnastics teacher performing a movement and thereby communicating and teaching it to the student, is analysed by the Stoics as the expression of a *lekton*, which the student grasps. To push this suggestion further, the question the Stoics are raising is whether, in the context of teaching (in which one, at least, aspires to communicate a true and trustworthy basis for the further acquisition of knowledge), a choreographed, i.e. ordered, sequence of movements is not a guaranteed way to express something, which cannot be false, and which is most liable to be grasped by the student.

It is a suggestion pushed further still in a treatise on dance written by the second-century AD essayist Lucian of Samosata. Dance is described by Lucian as central to our expression and grasping of truths and reality: dance 'articulates the things which have been conceptualized'³—a formula in which we find terms which belong not to aesthetics but to dialectic and epistemology. This description is not metaphorical, since Lucian argues that dance is the crowning of an education, being 'the culmination not only of—(what we might more readily expect)—music, rhythm, and timing, but of philosophy itself, especially physics and ethics'.⁴ In fact, Lucian adds, dance supplants dialectic by rendering it 'superfluous'. The three divisions of philosophy, (dialectic,

³ Luc. Salt. 36: 'τῶν ἐννοηθέντων ἐξαγορευτική'.

⁴ Luc. Salt. 35: 'πάσης παιδείσεως ἐς τὸ ἀκρότατον ἀφικνουμένην, οὐ μουσικῆς μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ῥυθμικῆς καὶ μετρικῆς, καὶ τῆς σῆς φιλοσοφίας μάλιστα, τῆς τε φυσικῆς καὶ τῆς ἠθικῆς.'

physics, and ethics) are thus named, all the better to root the discussion about dance within a serious discussion of philosophical analysis.

There is no need for dialectic, says Lucian, because to dance, a dancer ‘must know the things which are, the things which will be and the things which were before’.⁵ There is a great deal to say about this, but suffice it here to note that, again, the formula does not belong to aesthetics, but to dialectic, to ontology, and to logical determinations governing its structure. It is a formula which in fact echoes a definition of dialectic as the science of what is true, false, and neither, with the same all-encompassing ambition in which ‘nothing is left uncovered’, as Lucian himself emphasizes.⁶ Lucian thus plays with the philosophical tradition he is drawing on, endorsing its objectives, those of a comprehensive analysis of the rational laws structuring reality. At the same time, there is an element of provocation, tending to explode this framework, with the suggestion that dance may supplant dialectic. It is ordered movements which are the bearers of ‘clarity’ (*saphêneia*), the aim of philosophical analysis. The methodologically and philosophically loaded term ‘*hermēneia*’, i.e. the capacity to make oneself understood, is now put down to the ‘clarity of gestures’: ‘what I mean’—Lucian declares—‘is that explanation is now a matter of clarity of gestures’.⁷

Further down, towards the end of the treatise, Lucian ratifies the coined designation of the dancer as a ‘*cheirisopher*’, a philosopher of gestures, whom one goes to see ‘in order to become a better person’.⁸ Lucian underlines the ethical upshots of dance’s capacity to explain and make reality clear and understood. He does this in his name, and in the name of testimonies as ideologically diverse and chronologically broad as possible. Thus, though dance is not usually considered as an important question of philosophy, Lucian gathers ample references to the endorsement by the great philosophers and thinkers of his (and our) past, of the importance of dance, not the least from Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Chrysippus.⁹ To suggest that dance should be a culmination of philosophical study, in a serious context of argumentation, which the treatise *On Dance* certainly is,¹⁰ is in itself to make a philosophical claim about dance.

Lucian speaks of dance as a mode of complete rationalization over reality, he says that ‘nothing in dance must be outside of reason (*logos*)’.¹¹ He thereby places dance at a level of access to the laws and structures of reality which has nothing to do with the mimetic and descriptive role dance is traditionally assigned.¹² In Lucian’s

⁵ Luc. *Salt.* 36: ‘τὸν ὀρχηστὴν εἰδέναι χρὴ τὰ τ’ ἔόντα τὰ τ’ ἑσόμενα πρὸ τ’ ἔόντα.’

⁶ Luc. *Salt.* 36, continued from previous note: ‘ὡς μηδὲν αὐτὸν διαλανθάνειν’.

⁷ Luc. *Salt.* 36: ‘ἐρμηνείαν δὲ νῦν τὴν σαφήνειαν τῶν σχημάτων λέγω.’

⁸ Luc. *Salt.* 69 reports here the witticism of Lesbos of Mytilene, a writer and rhetorician of the first century AD: ‘Λεσβῶναξ γοῦν ὁ Μυτιληναῖος, ἀνὴρ καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός, χειρισόφους τοὺς ὀρχηστὰς ἀπεκάλει καὶ ἦει ἐπὶ τὴν θέαν αὐτῶν ὡς βελτίων ἀναστρέψων ἀπὸ τοῦ θεάτρου’, ‘Thus, Lesbos of Mytilene, a fine and clever man, called dancers “*cheirisophers*”, and he used to go and watch them so that he would return from the theatre a better man’. This coinage is echoed by BULWER’S 1644 treatise on ‘*chirologia*’, see 4.4 n.35 and 5.1.3.4 above.

⁹ See Luc. *Salt.* 25 on Socrates; *Salt.* 34 on Plato with a reference to the *Laws* (presumably the discussion of the pedagogical role of dance at Pl. *Leg.* 653d–655b); and Luc. *Salt.* 70 in Plato’s discussion of the rule of reason in the soul; also Luc. *Salt.* 70 on Aristotle’s theory of proportions.

¹⁰ See further SCHLAPBACH 2008.

¹¹ Luc. *Salt.* 69: ‘τὸ μηδὲν ἔξω λόγου’.

¹² See Arist. *Poet.* 1, 1447a26–8: dance is a mimetic art, ‘representing character, emotions and actions’.

characteristic tone, which has all the appearances of mockery but is actually very serious, he appeals to Socrates for whom 'dance was not only something to admire, but had to be learnt [. . .] in the most serious manner'. He says that, if only Socrates knew of the perfections attained in Lucian's day, 'he [Socrates] would teach nothing else but dance'.¹³ To leap forward seventeen centuries, it is a sincere regret of ours that Lucian cannot witness the bemusing achievements of contemporary dance, and one of its apogees in the work of McGregor. For the kind of liberation of dance from its mimetic and representative roles, precisely what is advocated by Lucian's enthroning of dance as the new logic, has been fulfilled through a historical process, accelerated since the second half of the twentieth century. It has been a process of gradual understanding, and explicit acknowledgement of the distinction between the codified laws of dance as an accompaniment to a spoken narrative, and dance as a language in itself. The raven girl in the cover photograph embodies this new-found responsibility: that the choreographed motions of the body get something said in themselves, and not as an adornment to something else. It is up to her, with her grammar of the body, to capture the order of reality. It is up to her interlocutors, us, to grasp the *lekta* thereby revealed.

¹³ Luc. *Salt.* 25.

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CMG: *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum* (1908–2005), Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

FDS: *Die Fragmente zur Dialektik der Stoiker*, 4 vols, Hülser, K.-H. (ed.) (1987–88), Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog.

GCS: *Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte* (1953–69), Berlin: Akademie-Verlag.

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